

Eng. Theatre vol. 36
THE

M A L L:

OR THE

Modish Lovers.

A

COMEDY.

Acted by His Majesties Servants.

Inceptis nulla Potestas.

LONDON,

Printed for William Cademan, at the Popes-head in the lower Walk of the New Exchange in the Strand. 1674.

THE

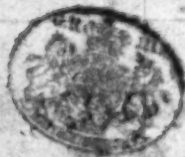
OF THE

Modish Lovers.

COMEDY.

As acted by the English Players

in the Theatre Royal



Printed for William Tuckwell at the ... in the low-
er Walk of the Strand near the ... 1744.

T O
WILLIAM WHITCOMB, *Junior*, Esq;



Need not plead the priviledge, which the Tribe of Scribes may lay claim too in Dedications, since your favours excuse these weak respects I pay you in a publick acknowledgement. All the interest I have in the Play, is inferiour to the Glory I take, in seeing your Name fixt in the Frontispiece; which methinks, gives it a resemblance to the Structure of *Minda*, where the Porch far exceeds the House. I know you have a Victorious Soul, and thence I do my self the Honour (not without policy too, especially in the time of threatening Thunder, when Demicracks of the Town, according to custome, will bark at Shadows) to run under your Laurel, to avoid the Clap. Many there are yet to unload their Mouth *Granadoes*, those especially whose own actions were advise to the Painter;

Epistle Dedicatory.

yet for any Gentleman to become an infected
mock Critick for Fashion sake, is as much be-
neath his credit as to wear a Velvet Coat,
when every *John-a-Nokes* presumes the fashi-
on. I am very much in pain for the violence
done to my inclination, whereby I am forbid
to acknowledge the Person, and Obligations
done to the Play, only (as 'tis said) in favour
to my interest. — What e're the reason be, I
think the Play highly advanc'd in lying at your
Feet; But in the mean while I pray, twere in
my pow'r to present you with something Ho-
roick, and like your self. I am proud to say
you want no Soul, but Titles to make you
popular, and wishing you the measure of your
Worth, I think it duty to subscribe my self,
the

Humblest of all your Creatures,

J. D.

Poetis nulla Potestas.

Th

The Prologue.

When you cry Poets down, and damn 'um thus,
Like Vipers slain, they grow more numerous:
Like to Egypt's Plagues around you swarm,
But you are proof against such common charm:
We know that none, beside a first rate Wit,
Can please the grand Inhabiters o' th' Pit;
While others work, each Ninnny of the Town,
Takes priviledge to damn for half a Crown.
Our Muse wants complaisance, knows not the Court,
Although she fain wou'd be a prostitute;
Her walks are very near, and there you'l find,
Her Evening leure, too safe to be unkind:
Yet those that Criticks are, for fashion sake
Will judge this dull, which scarce is a mistake;
And finding one fault, will make ten times more,
Of force a flaw where there was none before.
Yet if your bitter pysson, this ha'nt
You wou'd some lingring, paining sentence choose.
Prove Tyrants, and with leisure till the third day, kill.
Thunder Damnation then, and what you will.

The

Dramatis Personæ.

Mr. Easy.	An old Husband.
Courtwell	His Kinsman, a brisk Gallant, Newly arriv'd from Spain.
Lovechange.	Privately married to Mrs. Woodbee.
Sir Ralph Spatter.	A foolish Country Knight, Rival to Amorous.
Jo.	His Man.
Amorous	Servant to Grace, and Nephew to Mr's Woodbee.
Mrs. Easy.	Young Wife to old Easy.
Mrs Woodbee.	
Grace	In love with Amorous, and Niece to old Easy.
Perigreen	Alias Camilla, a Spanish Lady Disguise.
Peg	Woman to Mrs. Easy.
Clare	Woman to Mrs. Woodbee.
Betty	Woman to Grace.

Scene St. James's Park, with the adjacent Places.

The

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Actus Primus, Scena Prima.

Enter Lovechange solus.

Love. **A** Pox of this Love, how damn'd and Idle t'has made me, here have I march'd a long half hour, which Egad is an Age to me, to wait for this Ambassadour of my amorous Negotiation, pray Heaven no Rival of mine leads her into Temptation!

Oh Lady!

[Enter Peg.

Peg. O Lord! What make you here so early?

Love. Oh Peg, thou know'st Love is a restless Bedfellow, Peg, alas, who could sleep, that could but hope the blessing of seeing thy sweet Mistress. *Peg.* Well, what news, what news, from Cupids Court Wench, ha! Will she be kind, and consider my Passion, faith I am but a dead Man without a little comfort.

Peg. Faith Sir, I am not idle in your behalf, I take all opportunities (which is) when her Husband's out of the way, to let her know my thoughts of you, which He assure you Sir are most advantageous.

Love. I am beholding to thee *Peg.*

Peg. But you know Sir, she's a married Woman, and ought to be very cautious.

Lov. Oh *Peg*, I love her with a vertuous Flame, believe me I do! and if thou wouldst but swear and lye, and use a small kind of Treachery in the Case —

Peg. You need not doubt such small services Sir — But —

Lov. But thou must be a little encouraged, is it so? Here, here's a pair of Angels to invite thee to speak. — [*gives her Money.*]

Peg. Do you take me for *Balaams* Ass Sir, that can't speak without a Prompter, however Sir, you court me in no common Language.

Lov. Oh thou art a Saint, that will despise a Prayer, made in the vulgar Tongue, here Proxy, here's my Hand, and Seal, get it deliver'd, and further the design.

Peg. I, but Sir, is there no harm in't?

Lov. What dost thou call harm?

Peg. I mean Sir, is there nothing, but what I may carry with Honour?

Lov. Fye, fye *Peg*, dost think I'de make a Bawd of thee?

Peg. I hope you wou'd not at my years.

Lov. Right, having so many yet to come of the kind and amorous ones, But this Letter *Peg* is only to invite thy Mistress into the Park to night. I know the Evening will be fair, and if she can make an escape from that old impotent Letcher her Husband, I shall be glad to kiss her hands there.

Peg. Is this all?

Lov. Upon my Life.

Peg. Then rest in hope, for I dare promise ye.

Lov. Farewel dear *Peg*.

Peg. Your Servant sweet Mr. *Lovechange*.

Exit Peg.

Enter Courtwell who meets Lovechange going out.

Lov. Courtwell!

Court. *Lovechange*, I have been a dozen times at thy Lodging to see thee, but, like the Devil, thou art always ranging about, seeking whom thou canst devour.

Lov. Thou hast small reason to accuse me *Courtwell*, for since thy arrival from *Spain* I have not enjoy'd thee at our old rate; we were wont to Whore, and drink together like loving Brothers in Iniquity, but I think thou now hast taken up a little of the Formality of the

the Climate, and dost all thy Debaucheries in secret.

Court. No *Ned*, I have rather learnt the sobriety of that Nation, and have left off those lewd courses.

Low. Nay, if thou bee'st come to that, to call e'm lewd thou'd'st better e'n have staid amongst e'm, for thou art unfit for this Town *Egad Will.*

Court. I think I had not so soon abandon'd that agreeable place, but for the Commands of my Uncle *Eassy*; upon whom my Fortune does so depend, that I dare not disobey him in any thing.

Low. What, Ile warrant ye, he has that old fashion'd design of Matrimony in his head, he means to marry thee.

Court. Some such thing.

Low. And who is the wretched thing, I pray?

Court. The rich Widdow *Won'dbee*, she's damn'd ill-favour'd, and they say as ill natur'd, but she'll serve for a Wife *Ned.*

Low. How, the Widdow *Won'dbee*—my Wife *Egad!* [aside]

Court. Yes the very same.

Low. Hark ye *William*, I don't like the match *William!*

Court. Your Reasons?

Low. I have divers, and sondry—That must be nameless [aside]

Court. Let's hear a few of them.

Low. Why, first she's Old, next Jealous, she is, to Damnation, Proud, Expensive, and ———

Court. This is all nothing.

Low. She is beside—a Plague on him I dare not discover— [aside]

Court. What Sir?

Low. Nay, nay dear heart, no passion prithee, for she's very honest, which makes her very insolent.

Court. Oh I am glad 'twas no worse.

Low. Worse! Nay here's ill qualities enough for one Woman a Conscience—But prithee was there never a *Dona* in all *Spain* worthy your kindness, but you must come back to *England*, and like a Jew, be forc'd to Wed in your own Tribe, ha!

Court. Prithee don't call any Sins to remembrance, Oh Friend! I had a Mistress in *Spain*, and such a Mistress, so kind, so fair—

Low. And so tyr'd you out with loving, was't not so? Aye there's the Devil on't.

Court. No, in an unhappy Adventure wherein I took the party of an *English* Cavaleir my Friend, I kill'd her Brother, who was of Quality sufficient to cause me to fear the inquisition, so I was forc'd to quit *Spain*, and meeting with the Command of my Uncle——

Lov. You soon lost the thoughts of your Mistress, and I shall advise you, as you love health and liberty! two excellent qualities, to loose the thoughts of this Widdow too.

Court. Nay, since I cannot marry where I like; Ile e'n marry for a World of Money, that's the next way, and the nearest I know to happiness, therefore I am resolv'd to put on the Fetters.

Lov. Pox on't they'l gingle after thee at that rate that all pretty Ladies will shun thee for a fusty Husband, and who would be ty'd up from Ranging.

Court. There are Ladies *Ned*, who consider not the Man, but his Pockets, half a peece for a clean pair of Sheets, half a Crown for a thrice retayl'd Bottle of Rhenish, and——

Lov. The Pox into the bargain.

Court. The Pox in others will be but the Gout in me.

Enter a Boy.

Boy. Your Uncle Sir, stays for you to go make a vidd to the Widdow Woodbee.

Court. Ile attend him.

Lov. You ought to ask me leave first Sir, if you knew all——
Tis well I am not a jealous Husband, and 'tis better I have no tempting Wife. [*aside*] Well Sir you will go then——

Court. Without doubt.

Lov. Well *Love* speed you Sir, 'tis well you're young enough to spare some hours, for o'my Conscience tis meer los of time.

Court. Farewel, farewel Sir, ha, ha, ha.

Lov. Let them laugh that win Sir, adieu.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene

Scene Second.

Enter Perigree, and Servant.

Perig. For Mrs. Woodbee at her house in St. James's street, — London. — [Reading the superscription of a Letter] Sure 'tis hereabout.

Ser. This must be the house Ile knock till they answer. [knocks]

Enter Clare.

Is this the Lady Woodbee's, Sweetheart?

Clare. It is Sir, may I know your affairs with her, for she is a little busie at present.

Per. I am a Stranger by Nation a Spaniard, and bring her Letters from her Brother who is Consul there.

Clare. Please you walk in Sir. [They go in and return]

Per. Well, Diego, thus far our business is prosperous, we are arriv'd to a Land, rich, and beautiful, and where the civility of the Inhabitants give me all the encouragement I can expect, grant ye gods I may find out this perfidious Renigado of Love, and Ile forgive what ere you make me suffer another way.

Enter Mrs. Woodbee and Clare.

Madam, you take it are the Lady to whom I am address'd, & these will inform you, why I take this freedom. [Gives her Letters, she reads]

Wood. Sir, I am not only oblig'd by the Laws of good manners, and civility to receive you well as a Stranger, but the Character my Brother gives me of you, binds me to a more strict observance: Sir, you're welcome, believe so, and command my house.

Per. Madam, you honour me, and if I take a freedom that unbecomes me, charge it on your bounty, not my boldness.

Wood. A pretty youth int'roth Clare, is it not?

Clare. Yes indeed Madam.

Enter Mr. Easy and Courtwell.

Per. Madam, Ile take my leave for a few hours to see the City, which done Ile wait on you again.

Easy. So, right Woman, can no more be without a Man, then a Puritan without his Bible.

Court.

Court. The Widdow looks very amorous upon him, methinks tis a fine Youth. *[To Easy aside.]*

Wood. Mr. Easy, Sir your servant.

Easy. No interruption, Lady, no interruption!

Wood. None in the World Sir I protest, this is a Person of Worth and Merit, recommended to me by the only Brother I have, and for whose sake besides his own I am oblig'd to pay him my respects.

Easy. By my faith, and he deserves it Lady, he is handsome, and young — But Lady, I have, once more, brought my Nephew to wait on you, and to know your resolution concerning those propositions I made you of Marriage; He make short work on't, I'm no Courtier, but let him speak for himself, he can talk many fine things of Love, and the like — In the mean time I'll take a turn in the Garden. *[Exit Easy]*

Per. gods! Is not that *Courtwell*? I must withdraw, or dye in what a happy hour am I arriv'd, to be a witness of his injustice! Oh Fortune! thou hast recompenc'd me for all the injuries thou hast done me, *[aside]* Madam! your humble Servant, it shall not be many hours before I kiss your hands again.

Wood. They will seem many to me. *[Exit Perigreen looking]* believe me Gentle Sir. *[With scorn on Courtwell.]*

Court. I find Widdow, though you profess a great deal of cruelty, and coldness to me, you can be kind too, when you please.

Wood. I am sorry you should take me for an insensible Mr. *Courtwell*, though for many reasons I am forc'd to say I cannot admit of any concern for your self, in a Word Sir I have reasons (that must be secret ones) to tell you, I cannot entertain your passion, I am a Person Sir, that —

Court. Seems to have heat enough about you Widdow for half a score, faith view me well, I am a strait chin'd fellow, clean limb'd, and sweet, and dare promise as much as any Man.

Wood. And perform as little as most Men; Well, just thus did my Husband promise before I had him; and now, though even in the Not Age of our Marriage, nay before the Wedding Sheets were sufficiently tumbled, I find him as reasonable a quiet Soul, as heart can wish. *[aside]*

Court. What if you consult on Widdow *[without his hearing]*

Wood.

Wood. In earnest Sir, I am past consideration, for I am resolv'd upon the matter.

Court. Not to marry?

Wood. By no means Sir, not you.

Court. Why then the Devil take thee for making me loose so much of my pretious time, why thou Unmerciful, Insatiable Widdow, that art not only content, to let me miss of thee, but the opportunity of gaining at least a dozen hearts of perhaps handsomer Women than thy self Widdow.

Wood. How Mr. Courtwell, handsomer! you are rude Sir, I must tell you.

Court. Handsomer! Why thou didst not take thy self to be a Beauty sure! but yet thou hast charms Widdow in bank, which are alurements I confess, and 'twas well thou hadst 'em at these years.

Wood. Years—Certainly I don't pass for a Sibel with you? this is beyond all patience, *Clare*, where's Mr. *Easy*?

Clare. Taking a turn with Garden Madam.

Wood. Let him come and carry off his scurvy Nephew here, or I shall set my Footman to do it in a more undecent manner: years quoth a!

Court. Fye on't, Age makes thee testy Widdow, ha, ha, ha.

Enter Easy.

Wood. Oh intollerable Mr. *Easy*, do you bring your Kinsman to affront me?

Easy. How Lady! Cocks bodikins, you mistake him 'tis the new way of making Love, he's a spark of the times Lady, and Courts A-la-mode.

Wood. Mr. *Easy* I know you mean well, and for your Ladies sake, who is a vertuous Gentlewoman, you are always welcome to my House, your Kinsman too, I lookt upon as a proper Gentleman, and one that I was Redivable too, for the passion he profess'd to me, but now he has discover'd so disagreeable a quality, that really I am forc't to say I do not like his conversation, nor his address.

Easy. Address Lady? I know not what you mean by address, but I am sure his Estate is worth a thousand pound *per annum*, and a better penny, and do you talk of his address?

Court. Uncle say no more, leave her to her own peevish humour,
and

and the bare imagination of so likely a young fellow as my self
Widdow I am resolv'd to have thee my way, or no way; so adieu
dear Widdow, I have other game in hand, besides tolerating going
to't, and so farewell Widdow. [Exit. Courtwell.]

Easy. Kinsman, come back I say.

Wood. Sir, 'tis in vain, let him go, for I am resolv'd never to dis-
pose of my self that way, this is my final resolution.

Easy. Is it so, then your Nephew, young Mr. Amorous, shall never
have my Niece Grace, and that's my final resolution. [Exit. Easy.]

Enter at the other door Mrs. Easy.

Mrs. Easy. Sweet Mrs. Woodbee, your Seryant, what looks are these
that cloud your smiles to day! What's the matter Friend?

Wood. Mrs. Easy I beg your pardon really, I did not see you, I
have been so ill treated by some friends of yours—

Mrs. Easy. Of mine! let me know who they are, and I'll secure
you from them to be no more so.

Wood. On my Conscience thou wilt keep thy word, for 'twas thy
most filthy Husband.

Mrs. Easy. My Husband! Nay I believe it, for in good earnest
Mrs. Woodbee, he is kind and civil to no body, nay, if you knew the
daily, aye, and nightly torment too I have from him, you wou'd not
wonder at his incivility to you.

Wood. Nay, I believe indeed, you have very slender comfort of
him, but alas, what can you expect from an old fusty fellow, that is
even past the years of wishing well to our Sex—

Mrs. Easy. You are in the right, Lord if I could but tell you the
story of all my sufferings of that kind, but I ought not to complain,
when there's no hopes left of remedy. [Sighs.]

Wood. So, I hope I have an occasion to be reveng'd on this Hus-
band of hers, and help contrive his being made a Cuckold; Hang me,
if I am not infinitely rais'd with the thoughts on't, ah sweet Venge-
ance! how I love thee! [Aside.]

Come, I am no Woman if I don't fancy what thou'lt be at, nay,
and 'tis but just and reasonable: 'Tis for Women of our youth, and
all that, to languish away in sickly imagination; No, no, thou shalt
make

make use of what Nature has bestow'd on thee, so much Beauty to be buried alive, with an old rotten Carcass. —

Mrs. Easy. What do you mean Madam?

Wood. That, which thou mean'st. Come Friend I know thy Soul, thou shalt Cuckold this Fellow.

Mrs. Easy. How! Cuckold my Husband, forbid it!

Wood. Husband! Why what vertue is there in that Name, does the old Fool act like one? What duty of a Husband do you receive from him, ha?

Mrs. Easy. That indeed is true. But —

Wood. I know you Married him out of humour, because you were in Love with another Man, but that Man, you have never yet confest to me.

Mrs. Easy. That shan't be long a secret, dear Friend, if this counsel you give me, proceed from your real thoughts?

Wood. So, let me thrive in the like success, when I have so great a provocation as thou hast, if I be not in earnest, I say agen enjoy thy self. I say be kind, be gay, and live for ever.

Mrs. Easy. And be a Whore? I blush to name it!

Wood. I see thou'rt willing, and I long to be reveng'd on the Insolency of thy Husband. (*aside*) Why look ye *Mrs. Easy*? You may call your self what you please, but so long as you can keep your own Counsel, you are pure, and unstain'd in the eyes of all the World.

Mrs. Easy. I confes, when I look upon *Mr. Easy* as a very useles Man to me, and how little Felicity I enjoy with him, I cannot scruple much at the thing propos'd. And therefore to be plain with you, I must own there is a Man, and such a Man —

Wood. I such a Man, I like, forward —

Mrs. Easy. 'Tis the same that once made honourable Love to me, but he had no Fortune, and I, not much, which parted us; And he has since, (by what good fortune I know not) rais'd himself in the World, for he's full of Money, which, manag'd by a strange liberality natural to him, is every day sacrific'd to me in Presents, and many entertainments.

Wood. Now thou speak'st as if thou understood'st thy self.

Mrs. Easy. He is beside a Gentleman, young, and infinitely agreeable.

Wood. 'Slife thou'lt make me Rival thee.

Mrs. Easy. He is extreemly solicitous for a meeting, I mean such a one, as may afford him, all I have to give. [Hides her face]

Wood. And hast thou the heart to refuse him this?

Mrs. Easy. Conscience, Conscience, Madam!

Wood. Away, with those silly thoughts, come, if thou bee'st certain of his Love, recompence it for shame.

Mrs. Easy. I receiv'd a Letter from him this very Morning, and I vow, I need counsel how to answer it, for 'tis to meet him this Evening in St. James's Park — Here's the Letter. [Gives her the Letter.]

Wood. Before I read it, I protest you shall promise to meet him, nay, and as he desires too, or loose my Friendship for an unwitty Woman.

Mrs. Easy. Well, you have prevail'd, He swears to you to follow your Counsel.

Wood. Well said, now He see in what pleasing stile he writes.

Reads.

Madam, 'tis strange, that after so many Vows, and protestations, you should still remain an Infidel! Why is it? You will force me to some Extravagance that unbecomes a Man; and the secrecy of that Flame I have for you, to express my Soul in: For Loves sake, for mine, whom once you said, you lov'd; and more, for your own Honour's sake, force me not into a stark madness that will undo us all. I vow he writes most passionately, oh do not force him to any despair, but be kind — Well, He read it out.

You have a Husband, and I have (Hell take e'm) other concerns too, that require my secret carrying on of this affair of Love. Therefore meet me this Night in St. James's Pel Mal, or expect to have me dead, or worse to morrow.

Tours Lovechange.

[Starts.]

Ha! It cannot be! Lovechange! 'Tis Witchcraft, this, Lovechange, Hell! 'Tis not his hand, oh but I am too well assur'd it is — Let me disguise my Rage, and strive against Nature.

[Aside]

Mrs. Easy. Well, what think you of't Madam?

Wood. I think all Men are false, and that Woman, whose honour is trusted in their hands, a ruin'd thing.

Mrs. Easy. Have you met with ought there that has wrought, this sudden

sudden change in you, if Women be not as false too, then how came you thus alter'd? Was it to get this secret of my Life from me, and then betray it? Bad Woman, farewell. *[Offers to go.]*

W. She must not go thus, nor must I discover, *[aside]* Mrs. Easy, come, be not angry with me, nor suspect me, your Letter only made me call to mind some former passages of my Life, in which I was betray'd; 'Twas such another Man as this you have describ'd, and such a Letter too, betray'd me, once, to ruine, but you may keep your word, for this perhaps is real. *[aside]* He counterplot you though.

Mrs. Easy, If there be truth in Man, this cannot erre, and believe he speaks all truths to me.

Wood. It may be so to you, but false to me, as thou art to thy Honour. *[Aside.]*

Mrs. Easy. Madam, Methinks I find a sudden alteration in you, I am sorry I have occasion'd it, pardon my ignorance.

Wood. Indeed you have put a melancholly thought into me, but 'twill not last.

Mrs. Easy. He take my leave, it may be you wou'd be alone, when you are dispos'd for't, He come and let you know my Adventure with Lovechange.

Wood. Oh how she stabs me! as if she'd found the mortal vein, *(aside)* your servant sweet Mrs. Easy, however you leave me now, I assure you the Relation of that Amorous adventure, will be very Cordial to me, as I shall order the matter—— *[Exit Mrs. Easy]*

Now Wit and Woman help me! *Enter Clare.*

Clare. Here's your Kinsman Mr. Amorous, Madam.

Wood. Let him come in.

Enter Amorous.

How now Nephew, thou look'st ill upon't.

Amor. As well as a successless Lover can do.

Wood. What still whining after Mrs. Grace? He tell you Nephew, I'de rather thou should'st never marry, then be oblig'd to that old fool Easy for thy admittance.

Amor. Madam, I was the most acceptable pretender, but I know not what Devil has possess'd him; For he comes into her Chamber just now, and finding me there, very full of choller, forbade me her presence, and his house, and told me what Treatment Mr. Courtmell

found from you, I should receive there for the future.

Wood. He has done well, I tell thee, I hate him, take a secret which thou know'st not. This fellow being vastly rich, had got my good will to marry me, the day was assign'd, the things provided; Over night, he by chance saw a woman of something (as she, and he thought) a better Face, and married her. This, from my Pride, I do so stomach that I can never forgive.

Amor. Yet, you seem to be very kind to the Lady, Madam?

Wood. I do so, and will revenge the affront I warrant thee.

Amor. But Madam, though you love not him, let not the Niece in your opinion inherit the crimes of the Uncle, give me leave to adore her, for she's all sweet and innocent.

Wood. I am not so ill natur'd, but I will say, that if without her Uncles leave you can gain her, (for I scorn thou should'st be a suitor to him for any thing) I give my consent, for besides my aversion to the old Man, I have a secret Reason not to marry *Courtwell*, which you shall know hereafter. I have some affairs of my own to dispatch before Night.

Amor. Madam Ile follow your directions in all things.

Wood. Cousin, I had forgot to tell you, that there is a young Man, a Person of Quality, arriv'd from *Spain*, from your Uncle there, he has made my house his home, and pray treat him kindly.

Amor. I shall obey you Madam.

Exeunt Woodbee, and Amorous severally.

Enter Mrs. Easy, and Peg.

Peg. I am very glad Madam, that you are at last resolv'd to oblige Mr. *Lovechange*, Ile swear he's almost wild for your answer.

Mrs. Easy. When will he call for't?

Peg. Madam, he's walking here hard by, or will be immediately, have you writ?

Mrs. Easy. No, but you may let him know my mind, that is, that I will be in the *Mall*, as soon as it begins to be dark, if I can get from my Husband.

Peg. Oh Lord Madam! Now I think on't, we look for Sir *Ralph Spatter* to night, Mrs. *Graces* Sweet-heart, and my Master designs to make a *Malquerade* as they call it, on purpose to entertain him.

Mrs. Easy. That's true, some way must be contriv'd to cheat him of

of my Company. For *Peg*, now I have resolv'd upon't, I cannot forbear going, had my Husband been any thing approaching to Man, I shou'd have believ'd I had long'd, so great is my desire of seeing *Love-change* to night. Oh, this dear Letter has so powerful an attraction, that I must go. *[Kisses the Letter.]*

Peg. Some way we'll find out. O dear Madam, here's my Master in Rancour, for I had forgot to tell you forsooth, that he has forbid *Mrs. Amorous* the house, and that *Mrs. Grace* is full of dolour.

Enter Mr. Easy, snatches the Letter out of *Mrs. Easy's* hand.

Mr. Easy. What's this I pray?

Mrs. Easy. I am undone! Nay I protest you must not see't for the World, it is a new Song.

Mr. Easy. Some bawdy Lampoon, Ile warrant ye, Ile see't.

Mrs. Easy. Ile protest it is not Sir, when 'tis set you shall hear it sung. *[Enter Grace weeping.]*

'She's come in very good time. Alas! poor Cousin *Grace*, and have you Sir, can you be so cruel to Cousin *Grace*, pray let her have the Man she loves. ——— *Peg*, hast never a Song to change this for? *[Aside.]*

Peg. Yes, Madam, but 'tis a very scurvy one.

Mr. Easy. I say Ile see the Paper.

Mrs. Easy. Any thing dear *Peg*, but the Letter, *[Aside]* come Dear will you consider *Grace*?

Mr. Easy. The Verses I say, I smell a Plot, 'tis some Love Letter, come, come, produce, produce.

Mrs. Easy. I vow Dear I am asham'd you shou'd see e'm, they are so very silly.

Peg. I Sir, and something ———

Mr. Easy. Bawdy too, Ile warrant ye, let's see, let's see.

Peg. Truly Sir, my Mistress has not read e'm yet.

Mr. Easy. What's here, Sig — Sig, Signior — hey day, what's the Devil got amongst you two: I shall Signior ye, and you want a Signior.

Mrs. Easy. What say you concerning *Grace* Sir?

Mr. Easy. I say you are all naught, and 'tis time you had all Men, lusty Men, able Men, for the Devil will supply their places else, and therefore I design to morrow, to marry *Grace* to a young lusty Lad, and a Knight, de ye see a Knight. *Grace.*

Grace. How Sir, marry me, and run to Mr. *Amorous* mo? you lo
Mr. Easy. *Amorous*! Let me but see the picture through the Win-
 dow upon *Amorous* again, and he makes a Nut for thee, you do hear,
 where thou shalt languish with the thought of flesh, and every day
 shall be a Good-Friday to thee.

Grace. You will not be so inhumane, will you Sir, you have the
 liberty to chuse Youth and Beauty here in my Aunt, and despise
 Riches as the most unvaluable things; and can you believe I am so
 unlike you to chuse Wealth and an empty Title before so much
 Worth as dwells in Mr. *Amorous*.

Mr. Easy. If I have play'd the Fool, I do not mean you shall do so
 too. I have a Wife indeed of Youth and Beauty, but had I known
 the continual Plague of keeping her honest, she should e'n have been
 left to her old Gallant *Lovechange*, perhaps his Youth without my
 Money, had made her take the same courses, that my Money, and
 no Youth does, but I have rid my hands of him, thanks be prais'd.

Mrs. Easy. This is unkind Mr. *Easy* to upbraid me with so innocent
 a kindness as I had for Mr. *Lovechange*.

Mr. Easy. Nay, now I dare swear for thee, but yet I cannot help
 fearing, for Sweetheart he is very much spruce'd up of late, that is,
 since you were married, goes Rich, and spends high; notable signs,
 that some old Fool, or other may have a handsome liberal Wife, but
 thou art truly honest. Well, we do every moment expect Sir *Ralph*
Spatter, pray let there be musick got, and let the young Folks dance,
 invite Mrs. *Lay-it-on*, and Mrs. *Frisker*, and who else you please, and
 their Husbands, and entertain his Worship after the London fashion,
 He have it handsome.

Grace. Madam, I'm undone if your goodness don't assist me.

Mrs. Easy. Fear not, He warrant we'll take some care, I know too
 well the torment of forced Marriages to wish thee that punishment,
 but Cousin, pray do you see all things got in order to night, for I
 have a visit, or two, to make of concern.

Grace. Madam, you shall command me.

Exit Mrs. Easy.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir, here's a Gentleman inquires for you.

Mr. Easy. Bodikins, tis Sir *Ralph*, bring him in.

Ser. I believe it is Sir.

Exit Servant.

Enter

Enter Sir Ralph and Boy.

Sir Ralph. Sirrah, go you and look out Mr. *Louchange*, and let him know I am come to Town, and shall have need of that small sum of money he owes me. *[Exit Boy.]*

Mr. Easy. *Sir Ralph*, I am yours, and heartily glad to see you.

Sir Ralph. Sir, I am as much yours, and as glad to see you, and so I am to see you forsooth.

Grace. 'Tis more than I am to see you, He promise ye.

Sir Ralph. Oh cry ye mercy, then you are not the Lady. I took you for, I thought you had been Mrs. *Grace* my Mistress?

Mr. Easy. That's her name Sir, and her quality.

Sir Ralph. Truly Uncle, that must be, if he have no better, you are much to blame for giving her no better education, I thought she would have receiv'd me with open arms, for though I say it, I deserve it, and understand breeding.

Grace. I doubt it Sir.

Sir Ralph. You can't oblige me more, then to question my ability, for then you give me occasion to show my parts, and first as touching the Art of Courtship, though I don't read Romances, Plays, Histories, Pastorals, or Fables, yet can accost a Lady after this sort — Madam, (with my Face serv'd up thus) I am your proud Servitor, or in English proud to serve you, my hands beneath your feet, is too mean a sacrifice; go where you will, I am your shadow, advance but the standard of your eyes, and I'm your Captive, your Creature, your very Frögg, begot, by your gentle influence. P'rhaw I am furnish'd with a thousand things of the like nature.

Mr. Easy. Rate, rare, I vow, ah *Sir Ralph*, were I a young Wench for your sake, I cou'd hug you, and love you all over.

Grace. Pray do so for me Sir, for I find no one part of him to move me to't.

Betty. Madam, if I were you, I wou'd dissemble with him a little.

Grace. I had as good do so indeed *Betty*.

Mr. Easy. A little time, will make him pliable.

Sir Ralph. P'rhaw, I don't question that mun, what do you think

Mrs. Grace.

Grace. Sir, I hope time will convince me of my error, and let me see, that you have perfections, which are yet disguis'd.

Sir Ralph.

Sir Ralph. I thank you *Mrs. Grace*, for your good opinion of me, and shall I hope do well against to-morrow.

Grace. I were unkind Sir, to forbid your hope.

Sir Ralph. Well then, Ile set my seal upon you, in sign and token that you are my own. *[Kisses her.]*

Mr. Easy. Oo, now *Grace*, you may withdraw, get things in a readiness against night.

Grace. I obey you Sir. *[Exit Grace.]*

Sir Ralph. Sir, I must crave your excuse for a few moments, I am going to call in a little Money, an ill office to play the Dun, but you know Sir, we Lovers that have peevish Mistresses to deal with, require more than bare Courtship, well adieu Sir.

Exit Sir Ralph one way.

Mr. Easy the other.

Enter Lovechange solus.

Lov. This is my constant walk three times a day, pray Heaven the Neighbourhood don't take me for some walking spright, that upon certain hours, comes to give some intelligence of hid treasure.

But here's *Peg*, now dear Soul, what answer dost bring me? Shall I see my Mistress? Shall I be happy this night?

Peg. I know not how happy 'twill make you, but she will be this night in the *Mall*, at the upper end.

Lov. Dear Maid, Ile owe thee the Indies for this.

Peg. I Sir, if you did but know, what shift my Mistress makes, you wou'd think your self oblig'd and indebted too I can assure you.

Lov. No more, here's an earnest of what I owe thee, prithee give her my service, my Love, my Heart, and Soul, honest *Peg*.

Enter Sir Ralph.

Peg. Oh las, what shall I do, here comes *Sir Ralph Spatter*, *Mrs. Grace's* Sweet-heart; who by no means must see me.

Lov. Why I hope he's no Rival.

Peg. No Sir, but he may hereafter know me, for he's a Suitor to *Mrs. Grace*.

Lov. Leave me then, for I have a message from him, and will take this opportunity to speak to him. *[Exit Peg.]*

Sir Ralph. *Mr. Lovechange*, your Servant, I sent to you just now, and am glad to meet you, you know my business Sir.

Lov.

Lov. Yes Sir, I know you pretend I owe you a thousand pounds, but I am not provided with such a sum at present.

Sir Ralph. Sir, I shou'd not have given you this trouble now, and at so short warning, but that I am upon my marriage, and there are a thousand Perquisites, and Trangams requir'd, in order to the gaining my Mistress.

Lov. Save your money Sir *Ralph*, save your money, for this is no time to present idle Women, they are vain enough of themselves, do not raise them.

Sir Ralph. I, but Sir, we that are Lovers, must do these idle foolish things, or loose those more foolish idle things call'd Women.

Lov. If all Lovers, are to walk by one Rule, then Sir I am in the same predicament with you.

Sir Ralph. Why, are you going to marry too?

Lov. Faith, no Sir, I thank my Stars, but I am as much in Love, as those that are.

Sir Ralph. Well Sir, I am a little in haste now, pray think of the Debt, your Servant Sir. [Exit Sir Ralph.]

Lov. Pox of that foolish noddle of his, to believe i'll ever pay that Debt, which I was trappan'd into, by the old Rogue his Fathers cunning? as long as I have a Woman in my eye, no, no, my designs can't be carried on with empty Pockets.

Enter a Porter with a Letter.

Porter. I think Sir, your name is Mr. Lovechange.

Lov. The same—From whom, this?

Porter. The Contents will inform you.

Lov. Reads.

Dear Lovechange for some reasons that I must tell you, I have thought fit to alter my design of meeting you in the Mall, but will wait your coming at the side of the Duck-pond under those Trees, on the Bank,

I like the Resolution well, tell the Person from whom you come, I will not fail to be at the place appointed. [Exeunt severally.]

The End of the First Act.

D

Actus

Actus Secundus, Scena Prima.

Enter Mrs. Woodbee, and Clare.

Wood. **Y**OU are sure the Porter gave it into his own hand?

Clare. Yes Madam, and he said he would not fail to meet you.

Wood. Well *Lovechange*, I will be reveng'd, and innocently so, perfidious man, whom I married without Fortune, or Friends, believing that way to oblige thee, but thou ungrateful as thou art, mak'st no returns, but false ones, but at least I will possess thee once more in revenge to both, and then scorn, and abandon thee to thy former arts of living.

Clare. Well, I can't but think Madam, how mad *Mrs. Easy* will be, when she knows the trick put upon her.

Wood. Let her fret, till she grow old, but *Clare* I am not content to deprive her of all she expects this night in *Lovechange*, but I wou'd have it known, and at once kill the old Cuckold, and destroy her Pride.

Clare. Oh Madam, I have it just now alighted in my Brain: you know Madam, *Mr. Courtwell* makes love to you, and so he does to all Woman-kind by turns.

Wood. Yes, 'tis a loose Gallant, but what of him?

Clare. Why Madam, the next time he comes to wait on you. —

Wood. I have given him his answer, he'l trouble me no more — but suppose he shou'd — for I begin to conceive a Project.

Clare. Pray Madam let me speak first, for fear it shou'd be the very same I have, and I claim the priviledge of a discoverer: Madam, this very Man *Mr. Courtwell*, will I send to meet *Mrs. Easy*, instead of your Husband *Mr. Lovechange*.

Wood. I like the thing, and 'tis the very same with mine, but how to effect it? I fear we shan't meet with *Courtwell*, I wou'd not wish for a madder fellow, nor a more talkative.

Clare. Madam, walk off, for yonder's *Mr. Courtwell*, as pat as if the Devil had sent him for the purpose.

Wood.

Wood. I'll leave thee to thy wit, and him: [Exit Woodbee:

Enter Courtwell walking, Clare walks by carelessly.

Court. What's here a Prize, at this time of the day— Mrs. if a Man should beg leave of you to take a turn or so?

Clare. Two, or Three, if you please Sir—

Court. Kind, and gentle— [embraces her.

Clare. And your Servant *Clare* Sir.

Court. Ah! sweet Mrs. *Clare*, faith I am [turns up her Hood.
glad to meet thee, and how, and how, what shall we take a Bottle?
come *Clare*, thou should'st be kind, and Ile be grateful, come, I can
lead thee, the back way into the Bull-head Tavern, and we'll be
merry for half an hour.

Clare. Tavern Sir, what to do?

Court. Only to drink thy Ladies health, *Clare*, no harm at all I
protest *Clare*.

Clare. You wou'd be making Love I warrant too?

Court. A little Love *Clare*, for exercise only, alas, we that are
young and brisk cannot live without it.

Clare. Why Sir, I do yet understand, but little of that my self,
but I know a Lady Sir—

Court. 'Pho thou talk'st of future joys— but I am for a little of
the present, come dear *Clare*, be kind, upon my honour I have had
a passion for thee a long time, and will be as constant, nay I'll swear
to have no other Miss, but thee, and will keep thee as fine as e're a
Miss about the Town Egad now.

Clare. What, and pretend to my Lady Sir?

Court. That's for a necessary thing, call'd a Wife, but thou *Clare*,
shalt share with her.

Clare. For a whole week at least.

Court. By my troth, and a fair time too I take it.

Clare. Come Sir, you'd better drive the other bargain with me?

Court. What, for the Lady thou speak'st of, if thou could'st bring
it to pass suddenly, much might be said, but I hate delays.

Clare. This Evening Sir.

Court. Now I hear thee, her name and parts, I prithee.

Clare. You may know more in good time— but thus much now,
she's exceeding Beautiful, Young, and Innocent.

Court. No too much of the last, I pray.

Clare. Sir, to speak the naked truth, she is —

Court. Lovely, as Woman in the same condition —

Clare. No, but I vow Sir, I lye not, she's exceding handsome, well shap't, delicate fine, tall, virtuous, and —

Court. The Devil and all, whither wilt thou carry her, to the degree of an Angel ?

Clare. Besides, she's Rich, and needs none of your presents, nor keeping Sir.

Court. Oh thou hast ravisht me, I am all on Fire, for Heavens sake, sweet *Clare*, let me have this Nymph to allay my Flames ?

Clare. But Sir, I thought you had been in love with me ?

Court. I, I, *Clare*, I am in love with thee too, but this Lady, *Clare*, ha! where does she live Girl ?

Clare. Look Sir, if I bring you together, I have done my part.

Court. I, I, that shall suffice, let me alone for the rest, and reward thee.

Clare. Well then Sir, about eight of the Clock this Evening, here in the *Mall*, you shall find her in the upper end all alone, she is so, and so drest, of a good mean, and shape, not very tall. [*whispers*

Court. All this I like, but is this pure kindness to me *Clare*, hast thou no design, no trick to put upon me? or like the Devil, dost thou only enrich me to damn my Soul hereafter.

Clare. Why, to tell you the plain truth Sir, I have an end in't, and that is a little Revenge only, for Sir this Lady is to meet Mr. *Lovechange* there.

Court. *Lovechange*! A very Tyger at a Woman, introth thou art kind to the Lady, and putst her into gentler hands by far, but *Clare*, what spite have you to *Lovechange* ?

Clare. Now, what shall I say ? — Why truly Sir — He — (*aside* made a little love to me once, and the truth on't is, though I did not love him so well as to do —

Court. What, what *Clare* ?

Clare. That Sir; nay you make me blush I vow, yet I had such a smackerling for him, as will carry me to this innocent revenge.

Court. A plague on her, what does she call innocent, to rob a man of the enjoyment of the finest Woman in Town, (*aside*) well *Clare*,
Heavens

Heavens blessing, and this — go along with thee. [*giver her Money.*
But not a word of this to your Lady.

Clare. Adieu Mr. *Courtwell*, I warrant you for secrecie.

Court. Now will I go, and dress me as like *Lovechange* as I can, for I suppose that will please her best, here's the Rogue himself.

Enter Lovechange.

Lov. Oh, your Servant Mr. *Courtwell*, how thrives your Amour with the Widow, ha! what is she kind, and coming?

Court. Time has worn out, even the very thoughts of all those things in her, I think, which — because I can't forbear telling her, does so incense her, as the truth is *Ned*, I believe it will not be a match:

Lov. Oh, will it not so? Well I hope, like the Sea, what you loose in one place, you gain in another.

Court. Faith no, that grand concern of the World, making love, is quite laid by with me, I find none that are kind, but at so unmerciful a rate —

Lov. Thou art a miserable man, that canst not get the knack on't, for *William*, there be Ladies, yes there be Ladies, that will, and can love, look ye. [*shows a Letter.*

Court. Oh, you are a happy man Sir.

Lov. So might'st thou, did'st thou but use my Arts:

Court. Prithee, what be they?

Lov. Swearing, Lying, and shamming in abundance.

Court. Poh, all this, I dayly practice, but 'tis bootless.

Lov. Thou dost overdo't, or underdo't, there is a certain quantity goes to the charm, thou wilt find it out in time — there is a Lady *Will* — Egad, such a dear Soul — that has a passion for me.

Court. Oh, I doubt it not Sir.

Lov. And this night begins my Heaven, for I shall possess her *Will*, dost hear? possess her Lad.

Court. Then, I rather think 'twil end your Heaven, for you'll care but little for her after that.

Lov. Of, that Ile give you a better account to morrow, I writ a Letter to her to day to meet me here this Evening, and I am so impatient, that I can't forbear the place, till the hour come.

Court.

Govt. And what, is this the Garb you have design'd to entertain her in?

Lov. Even this.

Govt. Well, I congratulate your good fortune Sir.

Enter Peg.

Peg. I have been to inquire for you, and they told me, you were here in the Park.

Lov. I vow thou mak'st my heart ache, prithee let me hear thy message, quick; and put me out of my pain, I hope thy Mistress will come?

Peg. Yes Sir, and I only forgot to tell you how my Lady is drest, and therefore came to let you know Sir, she'll be — *[whispers.*

Lov. She need not fear, I shan't mistake her for any other, besides, she will be in so remote a part of the Park, that I suppose there will be hardly any but her self.

Peg. Lord Sir, what do you mean?

Lov. Mean? To meet thy Lady, and all the bliss I expect in this World.

Peg. But where Sir?

Lov. By the Duck-Pond side.

Peg. What do you mean sir? Are you not to meet her in the Mall? here, in this very place, where you now are?

Lov. No, dear soul, did not I receive a Letter just now from her to the contrary: That she desir'd to change the place for some reasons, best known to her self? here, read it thy self.

[gives her the Letter.

Peg. Duck-Pond side — for Reasons — ha, ha, ha — This my Ladies hand?

Lov. Why dost laugh Reprobate?

Peg. I wou'd I were married, if this be'n't an errant cheat, well, faith I laugh, but have more need to cry, to think how we poor Women are treated by you false men, now have you been boasting your good fortune to some kind hearted Lads, that's jealous of you.

Lov. The Devil take me *Peg* —

Peg. Hold Sir, don't swear, how cou'd this come about else? Oh that ever my Lady shou'd trust you.

Lov. By Heaven, thou wilt make me rave, I have not seen a Woman

man, nor will I see a Woman, whilst I have breath but thy Lady, Hell take me if I have nam'd her, but to the Air in sighs, and sure this must be hers.

Peg. Believe me Sir, she wou'd not trust this secret to any but my self.

Lov. 'Twas a Porter brought it me as I was walking here, and now I do believe 'tis some trick, therefore pray inform her, that according to her first order, i'll meet her in the Mall, here at the furthest end.

Peg. Ile let her know you will Sir, your servant. *Exit Peg.*

Court. What's all this communication?

Lov. About a mistake, this is the servant to that Lady I must meet at night, in order to which I must take my leave. [*Exit Lovechange*]

Court. Your servant *Ned*, good luck attend thee, now if I can but get here before him, and lead the Lady off, I shall be a double conquerour. [*Exit. Courtwell.*]

Scene Third.

Enter Mrs. Easy, Grace, and Betty.

Grace. Now I have told you Madam, how much I love, you'll judge at my unhappiness.

It may be, you have been a Lover too, and then I cannot doubt your pity Madam, I don't entertain you as an Aunt, our years are equal, and perhaps our hearts, but as a Sister, and a friend, I sue, and beg you wou'd afford me your assistance.

Mrs. Easy. I was your friend before I was your Aunt, and wish I had remain'd in that blest state, without advancing farther.

Far from the joys of Youth, and Love, i'me gone, but thou art wise, hold where thou art dear *Grace*, and wed thy self to something like thy self, despise Sir *Ralph*, and take young *Amorous*.

Grace. Oh Madam, how you do revive my Soul, this goodness in you, shows you just, as fair; but Madam, whence shall I derive my hopes; my Uncle's too severe, he won't suffer me to take my liberty abroad, nor here, and how can I find time to speak with *Amorous* who languishes with me by sympathy.

Mrs.

Mrs. Easy. This night your Uncle does design an entertainment: we'll be in Masquerade, Betty shall find out *Amorous*, and let him come also, mask't, none will know him, and if it be possible, get away with him, I conceive the project easie.

Grace. Most probable too, oh dear *Madam*! how I am oblig'd to your advice, and permission.

Mrs. Easy. Now I have instructed you, i'll be no more seen in your company to night, farewell, think of nothing but *Amorous*; whilst I prepare for *Lovechange*: [aside] [Exit *Mrs. Easy*]

Grace. Come Betty, follow me to my Closet for a Letter, if Prayers can help us, the gods shall want no sacrifice. Exeunt

Scene Mrs. Woodbee's house.

Enter Amorous, and Perigreen.

Per. Sir, I am infinitely oblig'd to you for your goodness to me an unhappy stranger, and when you know how much I deserve your pitty too, I don't doubt but you will give it me.

Amor. Nothing Sir that you can suffer, can deserve pitty, unless you be a Lover.

Per. Sir, I am a Lover, and so distressed a one —

Amor. Dare you not oblige me with the knowledge on't?

Per. T'would be too tedious, and too melancholly, and none but Lovers can a judgement make of what a Lover feels, therefore excuse me Sir.

Amor. To let you know, how great my sence can be I'll tell you I can love as well as any, nay, and compare my miseries with yours, I love a Lady Sir, whose youth, and beauty, make all Captives that but look upon her, 'tis such a Treasure, that had *Jason* known, he wou'd have let his golden Fleece alone, to have made a Rape on her, and like that too, 'tis guarded by so strange a monstrous Beast, an old decrepp'd Miser Uncle, that 'tis more difficult to charm his will, then fight a thousand Dragons, the Necessfull consent, and heart i've won, but am forbid to love by this old man.

Per. What reasons can he give for this severity?

Amor. He makes no objections against my Estate, or Person, for I

am sole heir to my Aunt, and all the hope of being so to that Uncle too; which you know in *Spain*.

Per. Your Person Sir, is far from being disgustful, 'tis rather to be admir'd, and lov'd what can the reason be?

Amor. Why Sir, he has a Nephew, call'd Mr. *Courtwell*—

Per. Heavens! What of him? [aside]

Amor. Who is design'd by this old testy man, to marry with my Aunt, she's rich, and as you see, not disagreeable.

Per. What will this come to? [aside]

Amor. But she for some reasons refuses him, yet he is worthy, young, and rich.

Per. Does she refuse him Sir? Oh false Dissembler.

Amor. You seem disturb'd Sir.

Per. Yes Sir, to think that no merits, no parts, though even Divine, can take a heart inflexible, my Case was so, but does he love her much?

Amor. For her riches only, her wealth, he courts, not her, cou'd he but gain her, I shou'd then be happy, for his Uncle declares, I shall be welcome to his Neece, when *Courtwell* is receiv'd well by my Aunt, or if he wou'd cease his Courtship, and make it elsewhere, in time, the old man might be reduc'd.

Per. I know this *Courtwell*, and will try my Arts to make him alter his, as well as his Uncles will, believe me Sir, I once had power o're him, and I will try and use it now for both your services.

Amor. I don't distrust your vertue, nor your will, pray see, what you can do, and let me be honour'd, with the Title of your friend.

Per. Sir, I am proud of the glory, and am your faithful Servant.

[Exit Perigreen]

Enter Betty.

Betty. Sir, I have a message to you, besides this, [gives him a Letter]

Amor. Welcome dear messenger of Love, oh how you blest my Soul!

Betty. You speak as if you were sure it brought love, and good News.

Amor. Nothing from this hand can be ungrateful! [Reads]
'Tis enough, yes I will come, though Hell oppos'd my passage *Betty*,
thou know'st the contents of this, and must assist my just design.

E

Betty.

Betty. Has my Mistress sent you word what habit she'll be in?
Amo. She has, but without that help, my heart would find her out, pray tell her how impatiently I long for the wish'd for moment.

Betty. Sir, that you may employ your self to advantage till then, you were best to provide the means to carry her away handsomely, and think of a place, where.

Amo. Oh *Betty*, trouble not your self for that, if fortune be so kind to me, to put her into my hands, I'll warrant her safety there, I'll defy Fate, to ravish her hence, keep but thy Mistress in this happy humour, and I don't fear success.

Betty. Well Sir, it grows dark, and I shall be wanted, I'll say all the kind things I can, and which I am sure you think, to Mrs. Grace, and so farewell Sir —

Amo. Oh *Betty*, thou canst not think what I wou'd say, nor I can't utter it, but let *Grace* imagine, she loves, and knows my Soul to be intirely hers, I will not fail a moment, and so disguis'd as none but she shall know me. *Exeunt severally*

Scene the Mall

Enter Mrs. Easy, and Peg.

Mrs. Easy. I wonder *Peg*, who this shou'd be, that has put this trick upon us, and sent the note to *Loverchange*?

Peg. Some of his Ladies from *Wildstreet Alley*, or some other such part of the Town.

Mrs. Easy. I cannot believe he wou'd reveal it to any, I have had many proofs of his prudence, and love, though no use of his secrecie, till this hour, pray Heaven I don't repent it.

Peg. Pshaw, what at your repentance already, good Madam, don't think of it, but go boldly on.

Mrs. Easy. Well, I'll be at the upper end of this Walk, but I am so impatient, that I wou'd have you go through the Guard, and see for him.

Peg. You need not doubt his speed, but however I'll go. *[Exit Peg.]*

Enter Courwell in a Cloak.

Mrs. Easy. *Loverchange, Loverchange!*

Cour.

Court. This must be the Lady — [*aside*] Madam is it you?

Mrs. Easy. I have sent Peg just now through the Guards to look for you; which way came you?

Court. By a Key the other way, now what shall I entertain her with for a beginning?

A pox on't, I shall spoil all. I fear, if I talk much, and I cannot come right down to the matter. [*aside*]

Mrs. Easy. You are thoughtfull, Mr. Lovechange, what is it some device to excuse the mistake of the Letter? Oh Lovechange! I could not believe, you would have treated my first kindness to you, in this ungrateful sort.

Court. What shall I answer now? some kind Devil assist me! [*aside*] Oh Madam, he that can be false to you, is a Reprobate to Heaven, and durst not aspire to the bounties of your love — but Madam — I am out again (*aside*) will you believe my Vows and Oaths? — By your divine self, by all that's —

Mrs. Easy. Hold, I must, I will believe you.

Ah Lovechange, you little think with what fear I come to yeild you up my Honour, after believing you false — But come you must dispose of me, I can't resist.

Court. Nay, if you be thereabouts already, I am happy enough: [*aside*] Madam don't destroy our pleasures with fears of any thing, for by all that's good I am intirely yours, come, whither shall I lead you, I am impatient. [*Enter Peg.*]

Peg. Madam, Madam.

Mrs. Easy. Stay, here's my Woman has something to say to me.

[*goes to Peg.*]

Peg. Mr. Lovechange is coming Madam.

Mrs. Easy. Coming! whether is he coming to?

Peg. To you Madam, as fast as he can.

Mrs. Easy. Fool, he's here already.

Peg. Already! where?

Mrs. Easy. Why, there thou Dunce.

Peg. He mounted a Cloud then, for I'm sure I saw him paying his Coach, and spoke to him, told him where you were, and run before, to give you notice.

Mrs. Easy. Thou art stark mad, I have entertain'd him this half hour, here.

Peg. Lord Madam, 'tis the greatest mistake in the World, I vow this is some forlorn, or other, that making a discovery of the Enemy unguarded, fell on, believe me Madam, 'tis none of Mr. *Lovechange*.

Mrs. Easy. Who the Devil shou'd it be then? Well 'tis a mercy I had not discover'd all to him.

Peg. If you have been together this half hour, I fear you have discover'd too much — 'Slife — I have it, I fancy this must be some body concern'd in the Intrigue of the Letter sent to Mr. *Lovechange*.

Mrs. Easy. Faith it may be so, Ile try, and fit him for't.

Court. Madam, you forget, that I am impatient of delay, what's all this whispering for?

Mrs. Easy. My Woman informs me, that some of my Relations are in the *Mall*, and 'tis possible may know me, therefore dear *Lovechange*, retire to some remote place of the Park.

Court. Madam, I obey you, with joy.

Mrs. Easy. The Duck-Pond side, I think most convenient; But for our beter security, go you about that way, Ile go this, and meet you.

Court. I take your word, and will be there before you.

Mrs. Easy. I believe you will, if at all? [Exit Courtwell.
Oh the villany of Man!

Peg. Oh th Wit of Woman! Madam, I adore your contrivance.

Enter *Lovechange*.

Mrs. Easy. My *Lovechange*!

Lov. My dearest Mistress!

Mrs. Easy. Oh I know that voice 'tis musick to my Soul, (aside that I shou'd be so dull, not to distinguish the false one, from the true! Well dear *Lovechange*, let's withdraw to some other part of the Park less open, for I have many eyes to watch me.

Lov. This overcharge of joy arrives too hastily, I shou'd have time to let it enter by degrees.

Mrs. Easy. No ceremonious Foppery dear *Lovechange*! our joys require some hast, but something *Peg*, I have to say to thee first, here take this Key, and dress your self in my Masking habit, and represent me this Evening, Ile trust thy management of the business, and thy Wit to deceive the old Man.

Peg.

Peg. Let me alone Madam, to act you to the life, till Bed time at least.

Mrs. Easy. Nay, I think thou may'st venture thy Maiden-head without danger, there too.

Peg. I think, for any great massacre he has made of yours, I may ; well Ile run, for fear of the worst. [Exit Peg.]

Lov. Come my fair Mistress, whilst thus I bear you off, to reap the joys of Love, I find more happiness, more real argument for glorious pride, then if Tryumphant Lawrel deckt my Brow, to speak me Conquerour of Monarchys? Exeunt.

Scene suppos'd the Duck-pond side.

Enter Mrs. Woodbee from one side, and Courtwell from the other, meeting.

Court. Well Madam, I find you are a Woman of Honour, and have kept your word, and then I need not doubt of all the happiness I wish beside.

Wood. Oh how my heart rises at this false Man, but I must dissemble it. [aside]

I vow Mr. Lovechange, 'tis well you can't see me blush, for I confess I am not us'd to these encounters.

Court. Come, come, fair one, no sence of shame I beseech you, for that will call the blood up to thy face, which shou'd be active in another part, oh that dear thought, faith and troth makes me impatient: Come, come where shall we be, where, where, what think you of yonder Bench?

Wood. Oh intollerable! he never was thus kind to me before! nor would he now, if he knew all. [aside]

Court. Come, come, no study upon the matter.

Wood. Fye, fye, Mr. Lovechange, no approaches to the business; methinks there shou'd be some short Prologue of Courtship, before the Scene of Love begin.

Court. Our youth, and vigour, needs none of all that, we are ready at all times.

Wood. I wou'd you were——

[Aside
Sir,

Sir, you have prevail'd, and overcome, but methinks this Bench is a very undecent place.

Court. Oh Madam! There has been many a worse Shift made, the night, and these kind shades, secure our joys.

Wood. But not your perfidiousness. [*aside*
He swear Sir, you are so importune. [*Exeunt hand in hand*

Scene Mr. Easy's house.

Enter Mr. Easy, and Sir Ralph.

Mr. Easy. Come, come, *Grace*, *Wife*, *Betty*, *Peg*, where be all these Girls, there is such tricking, such licking, patching, and finifying, that 'tis a shame to see't, and tedious to attend it, but to entertain you, we'll have a Song.

Sir Ralph. With all my heart Uncle.

A Song.

Poor honest Fool, I wonder what I meant?
When in the Marriage Circle, first I went.
What Magick's in that Name?
What pow'rful conjuration, can there be,
Or where's that too, too happy she,
That can allay Love — when 'tis Legion.

Yet for a quiet Life I've often dy'd,
But oft my Wife has Murdered me beside:
So stily too, she did the deed,
That at my Murderers sight, I cou'd not bleed:
Though a Phillis new inspires,
At once Life, and whole troops of fresh desires.

And yet shou'd I be constant still — I will,
Tis like a Rock, and like that too, Ile take
Each Wave that near me breaks:
And ravish't gently, for her cruel sake:
There Ile drink, and quaff, and ryot:
They're sickly Souls that keep more constant dyet.

Very

Very well, I vow, and swear now.

Enter Peg as Mrs. Easy, in Mask. Betty disguis'd like Grace, other Men and Women Mask'd, old Easy to Peg.

Mr. Easy. My dear Wife, now I like thee, it's not as good to be merry at home, as abroad?

Peg. Sir, I am all obedience, and like any place where you are.

Mr. Easy. Why, that's well said, come, inform the Musick, and Ile make one, and you *Sir Ralph* take *Grace* here, come *Grace*, be a good Girl, and love *Sir Ralph*. [Gives him Betty.]

Dance all.

Sir Ralph. Most judiciously tript, I vow and swear now, ha! little *Mrs. Grace*, come since you can wag your heels so prittily in a Dance, you'll wag something else in place where, Ile warrant ye, ha Rogue, thy handsome Leg, and Foot, has made me wish — you little think, what, I vow now.

Betty. Nor care to know Sir.

Sir Ralph. You lye like a pritty little Baggage faith now, you do know, and you shall know before anon, what say you Uncle?

Mr. Easy. I say, as you do *Sir Ralph*.

Sir Ralph. I Sir, and in order to't, pray send for a Cushion Cuffer, that there may be no more shall I, shall I, in the Case, for all flesh is frail, and Women fickle. What say you *Mrs. Grace*.

Betty. I am all obedience.

Mr. Easy. Come Ladies, and Gentlemen, I have a treat waits you within. *Enter Amorous disguis'd,*

Amor. That must be she by her habit, and shape, Madam do you know me?

Betty. Do you know me?

Amor. My heart tells me I do, and yours might answer you.

Betty. *Mr. Amorous*, — Oh Sir my Mistress —

Mr. Easy. How's this!

Sir Ralph. What's this a Rival, oh Uncle a Rival, a Rival.

Mr. Easy. Cocks bodikins 'tis this impudent young Hector *Amorous*.

Sir Ralph. How, *Amorous*? what's he? pray Uncle.

Mr. Easy. One, that wou'd rob you of your Mistress. *Sir Ralph,*
Sir Ralph,
go and take her from him.

Sir Ralph. I thank you for that, I make one of the worst bulleys in nature, I vow, pray Uncle do you handle him for me, he has a terrible grim look of his own.

Mr. Easy. Sir, pray who are you?

Amor. A troubled Spirit Sir, that still repairs to it's bright Treasure.

Sir Ralph. Oh are you so Sir? We shall conjure you, Uncle, Uncle.

Mr. Easy. First Mistress, come you o' this side——take her away

Sir Ralph.

Betty. 'Tis not *Amorous* Sir.

Mr. Easy. I will not trust you, nor believe you, but who e're he be, we'll leave him to himself. Your Servant good Familiar.

Sir Ralph. I, Sir your Servant, you see the Treasure's own'd, and you may please to walk, fare you well, fare you well.

[*Exeunt all but Amorous.*

Enter to Amorous, Grace from behind the Hangings, Easy returns to the door.

Grace. *Amorous*, my faithful Friend!

Mr. Easy. What this?

Amor. My dearest *Grace*, 'twas kindly done to undeceive me quickly, why didst not tell me of thy plot?

Grace. Because I wou'd surprize ye unawares, but dear *Amorous*, I have a plot for thee wholly necessary to our happiness, you must play the Parson, and marry this Fool to *Betty*, that we may have time for our escape, I have hid a habit within a purpose, haste dear *Amorous*, for our affairs require haste.

Mr. Easy. Oh rare Rogues, have I caught ye. [aside.]

Amor. Dear *Grace*, how I am oblig'd to thee for this contrivance, doubt not my management.

Grace. Ile wait behind these hangings for you. [Exeunt.]

The End of the Second Act.

Actus

Actus Tertius, Scena Prima.

Enter Sir Ralph, and Betty.

Sir Ralph. **N**ow I defie my Rivals, if *Amorous* court thee now, Ile have an Action against him, I hate these fighting Fopps faith, that upon every occasion are at Sa — sa — A pox of their Valour; firrah, court my mistress if you dare, says one, for if thou dost, this shall proclaim my right, then to't they go, and there's a Lover lost, perhaps the others hang'd, the Drunken Fopp cries dam ye, you dog, drink up your Glais, or you are not fit for civil Society; which if refus'd, to Tilting they go, and this they call an honourable quarrel. 'Tis likely three halfpence well manag'd at an Apothecaries, cures all the wounds they have, and they set up for men of Courage, brisk Bulleys of the Sword: These *Grace*, be the finest Blades of the Age, that court ye, and gain too, all the idle Women of the Town; and when a Country, down-right, honest, peaceable Knight, as I am, makes Love; we are laught at call'd *Sir Martin*, *Sir Nicholas*, and forty other ridiculous names; that the newest Comedies furnish ye withall; But *Grace*, I have money *Grace*, and a pox of formal Fopps.

Betty. Sir, you entertain me with things that concern me not.

Sir Ralph. Yes *Grace*, I wou'd have thee be wise now, thou art my Wife.

Enter Easy, leading Grace from behind the Hangings.

Easy. Be these your tricks Mistress, what you were hid to wait your Lover *Amorous*, were you? come along, or I will disgrace thee publicly.

Sir Ralph. What's this, what's this, my Uncle, and Mrs. *Grace*, why who the Devil have I married here then?

Betty. Your Friend, and Servant *Betty*, Sir.

Sir Ralph. How! why you have not cheated me thus, out of my sweet self have you? oh I'm undone, undone! [*cries.*]

Easy. How! *Sir Ralph*, married to *Betty*? Oh me, that I had but so much moisture in my whole body as wou'd keep you company

Sir Ralph, but since I have not, this baggage shall cry for me—go—get you in, and know your Commander. [Beats Grace in

Grace. Oh Betty, I'me lost. [Exeunt Easy, Grace, and Sir Ralph.

Enter Amorous.

Amor. So, now I have resign'd my holy Habit, and am become a lay Lover agen.

Betty. O Sir, my poor Mistress was discover'd behind the Hangings, and her Uncle has treated her very ill for your sake.

Amor. Discover'd! oh Betty thou kill'st me! so near my wish for Port, and sunk i'th very harbour. Malitious Stars!—

Betty. Well Sir, I don't doubt but for all this, to bring it about agen, in the mean time, 'twere good you shou'd retire, I will give you notice of all that passes.

Amor. I thank thee Betty, but I fear my Fate, Now near was I, to being Fortunate. [Exeunt severally.

Scene a Bed-chamber, a Table out, and a Chair.

Enter Mr. Easy, and Peg.

Easy. O Woman! monstrous Woman! Argus eyes quotha! I, ye an Hundred were not able to watch one Woman, a curse upon the whole Sex, and foolish Man for being so fond of 'em. Oh I am sick, very sick with fretting, ten years are taken from my time with this nights work, but I have her fast, and will as soon as day appears conjure her into better manners, oh my heart! But all my consolation is in thee my dear Wife. [Undresses himself.

Peg. What the Devil shall I say, or do? I dare not turn my Face toward the light, least he shou'd know me, and if I speak, I fear that will betray me, if I refuse to go to Bed, I discover all my Mistresses secrets, and then we are undone, if I go to Bed—Why then—Heaven knows what— [Aside

Easy. I am happy in this yet, that I in thee my Hony, have a loving Vertuous Wife, one that's above all the little Lightnesses of her Sex, yes, her villainous Sex. Come, come to Bed my Love.

Peg. Sir, since 'tis so near day, and you so hasty to take Revenge upon Grace, we had e'n as good save the labour of undressing. [Easy

Eafy. By no means, to Bed I fay, that I may take a little repofe, after this haraffing of my Spirits, but ftill I am thrice happy in thee.

Peg. Aye, wou'd you knew all — no hopes yet —
No Miftrefs come, what fhall I do? ſhe is fo taken up with her more foft affairs, that ſhe minds not how rashly I am like to be us'd with this old Maſter of mine. *(aſide)*

Eafy. Thou haſt but one only fault, and that is, not loving thy Bed, prithee reform that lewd and ſcandalous way of life, of fitting up late.

Peg. Lord, that he ſhou'd blame any Woman, that refuſes to go into a pair of Sheets with him. *(aſide)*

Eafy. Undreſs I ſay, or I ſhall be moſt villanous angry agen.

Peg. It muſt out, and it will out, but I am to be excus'd, for I have plaid my part, and counterfeited, till I am come to almoſt paſt counterfeiting. To Bed quotha', 'Slife I had as live lye in a Charnel houſe, I don't blame my Miftrefs for loving another, but hark, I hear a ruſſing [*noiſe below*] 'tis certainly ſhe, oh that I were now transform'd. *[aſide]*

Eafy. Why the Devil, come you not to Bed?

Peg. I am haſting as faſt as I can Sir. *[undreſſes her ſelf.]*
Please you to go in before, I won't ſtay a moment after you.

Eafy. Oh the intollerable Pride, and Plague of Woman-kind! I tell ye I will not budge a foot without ye, therefore come away, I will break thee of this humour at laſt. *[pulls her in.]*

Peg. Oh undone! quite undone!

Enter as below Mrs. Eafy, and Lovechange.

Mrs. Eafy. All is huſht, and ſtill, I hope all's well, oh my deareſt Lovechange, if you did but know with what regret I leave you, your pitty, wou'd certainly augment your love. 'Tis almoſt day, and yet methinks 'tis but a little moment we have been together: Oh how ſhort the hours of love and pleaſure ſeem.

Love. I think ſo too my Dear, wou'd it had pleas'd the gods to have bound us thus eternally together.

Mrs. Eafy. Can you dear Lovechange, ſpeak this Language ſtill? after enjoyment, men grow dull, and cold.

Love. Number not me, amongſt the common rout of thoſe, whoſe beaſtly Appetite begets a ſhort liv'd paſſion, mine like the object that firſt caus'd it, is pure, unchangable, without deceit.

Mrs. Easy. I must believe you, and must love you too, but we must part, oh that ungrateful word!

Lov. But we must meet agen, that only hope atones for the unkindness of the other, pray don't suffer many hours to pass, before you let me see you, I shall dye with one whole day of absence.

Mrs. Easy. You please me, when you do but wish to see me, and to return that goodness, for 'tis such [sighs] Ile study how to love, and how to please, and how to keep you ever in this state — This blest'd Estate of loving. But this is an Argument we must discourse at large of, now Sir adieu, for the first time I think we have done well.

Lov. I cannot leave the house, till I know how you speed with your too passionate Husband.

Mrs. Easy. Ile creep softly up, if he be asleep, I'm safe, for nothing but the noise of money can wake him, attend you below.

[Exit severally.]

A Bed-chamber discover'd, with Peg and Mr. Easy in't.

Peg. Discover'd! and undone!

Easy. Betray'd! ruin'd! betray'd! oh thou wicked, thou treacherous Wretch, where's my Wife, my lewd, wicked Wife?

Peg. Are you mad?

Easy. Yes, I am, and will shew it, thou Eternal Baggage.

Peg. So now let him strike, if he can aim well.

[They fight, Peg puts out the Candle. Exit Peg.]

Easy. This shan't serve your turn, I will cudgel thee, till I have not left a bit of skin on thy bones, I don't expect thou shoudst tell me whereabouts thou art, no Hufwife, Ile feel you out. I will, and so feel thee, that thou shalt feel me too.

[She gropes to find her.]

Enter Peg softly, and Mrs. Easy, in the same night-Gown that Peg had on.

Peg. So, now go you in, and receive a blow or two, and be sure you cry out lustily, and Ile come to your assistance with a Candle.

[To Mrs. Easy aside. Exit Peg]

Mrs. Easy. Good dear Husband be'n't so passionate, what have I done to cause this?

Mr. Easy. Thou impudent Harlot, dost call me Husband? tell me truly, confess, confess, what Rogue, has got thy Mistress out, where is she a Catterwawling? confess, or I will dissect thee, for thou art her Pimp —

[beats her.]

Mrs. Easy

Mrs. Easy. Your grief has made you lunatick, I am your Wife, hold, hold your prophane hands.

Mr. Easy. No, I will mark thee with a Vengeance, Ile spoil your Pimping.

Mrs. Easy. Murther, murther, since you are so inhumane, I will have no mercy on your Reputation, murther!

Enter Peg with a Light.

Peg. Bless me! what do I see, my dear Mistris?

Mr. Easy. Ha, ha, her dear Mistris? 'tis so, 'tis so, I, I, thou art *Peg*, and this is my own sweet Wife. *(looks on 'um both.*

Mrs. Easy. Sir, pray let me know why you use me thus? Is it not enough that you have married me to an old stinking Carcass, a uselefs thing, but you must beat me? I will no more endure you, no not the sight of thee.

Mr. Easy. Sweet Wife, most merciful Wife, bear with the frailties of my age.

Mrs. Easy. I have born with 'em too long.

Mr. Easy. Aye, there's it, It's that sticks by thee, but dear Wife I protest, I took thee all this while for *Peg*.

Mrs. Easy. How came you to mistake?

Mr. Easy. Why, when I was in bed, as you made me go before, you know, I fancy'd that the Papers which you were looking on at the Table —

Peg. Which was no other then a Prayer-Book to prolong time only. *(To Mrs. Easy aside*

Mr. Easy: And thinking it might have been a Love-Letter (for I am naturally jealous) stole out of Bed, and looking thee full in the face, I thought thou hadst been *Peg*, very *Peg*; as I am a lover of thy vertue, I know not how I came to be mistaken, but so 'twas, and I dare swear —

Peg. What Sir, that 'twas I? Lord how mesry you are Sir:

Mrs. Easy. And must I suffer, because you are old and blind?

Mr. Easy. Truth is, 'tis very unreasonable, pardon me my fair, my Angelical Wife, I will never trust my eyes again in this case.

Peg. Pray forsooth bear with his Weakness, and the Infirmary of Age.

Mr. Easy. Ah how she aggravates my crime, old, and age were no harm

harm, but that she's brisk and youthful, patience, good Lady, patience.

Mrs. Easy. I'm resolv'd he pardon ye this once, in pity to your years.

Mr. Easy. Aye, there 'tis agen.

Mrs. Easy. But if ever I find you faulty again, he be divorc'd.

Mr. Easy. Thou hast reason, for on my Conscience thou art as good a Virgin, as when I had thee.

Peg. He deny that, or she has past her night but ill. [Aside.

Mrs. Easy. I will not bed with you to night, for besides that I am exceedingly offended with you, you have mortifi'd all inclinations of a Bedfellow in me, and so fare you well Sir.

Mr. Easy. Patience I say — though I have no great matter to do a bed with her, yet I dare not trust her out of my sight, — but I must let her have her will this once, [aside] have you forgiven me?

Mrs. Easy. I shall do by the morning perhaps. [Exit Mr. Easy. So, go thy ways, and dream, if thou hast any subject for it in thy Brain, whilst he to Lovechange, and in his arms, compleat the rest of this so well begun night.

Peg. I too, deserve something for acting' so judiciously in this affair.

Mrs. Easy. Thou, dear Peg, art Loves Matchivil; and deserv'st a Statue rear'd to thy memory for all honest discreet Maids to worship.

Peg. Haste Madam, for Mr. Lovechange stays to take a parting kiss I'm glad we are come off so nobly, and that you have a little time, good for a little more delight, when you are pleas'd, we must contrive some way to free poor Mrs. Grace, who suffers for Loves sake too.

Mrs. Easy. Let me alone for that. [Exeunt amba.

Scene Mrs. Woodbee's house:

Enter Clare.

Clare. I wonder in my heart, where this Mistress of mine is, she'll e'n stay till 'tis light, and discover her self, pray Heavens she come before the house is up.

Enter

Enter Mrs. Wood.
Oh Madam how glad you are come before my Master, well how thriv'd you Madam?

Wood. Just as I wisht Girl, and as we contriv'd it, he met me at the Duck-Pond side, where we stay'd most part of the night, Oh had the Joys which I receiv'd been meant to me!

Clare. Madam you see, what imagination can do, and did he do as he ought to do Madam?

Wood. O Clare! he said and did so many kind things to me!

Clare. So many say you Madam? Nay then we shall have him come home as tame, and penive, as a Gamester, out-done in his own Trade of Nicking, now it may be I may go quietly about my business, all this day at least.

Wood. And I may lye quietly too, unless I can cheat him agen, well I was never so pleas'd, and displeas'd in my Life before, some way I will find to be reveng'd.

Clare. Some such Comical way.

Wood. No my hopes are gone for ever having of him this way in my power, oh this treacherous man that I have so oblig'd.

Clare. And he has this night made some returns.

Wood. Stay, when I think how great a satisfaction 'twas to him, to believe himself in the Arms of Mrs. Easy, I can't think of a better revenge, then to let him know it was not she.

Clare. Why, will you tell him Madam?

Wood. Yes, and at once destroy his vain glory, and let him know how sensible I am of the affront, if he has any sense of shame, or honour, this may reclaim him.

Enter Lovechange singing, taking notice of his Wife.

He's coming; how now Mr. Lovechange, what no good morrow after a whole nights absence?

Lov. What the Devil do you up so early? you become your bed far better.

Wood. I can't rest Mr. Lovechange, when you are not there.

Lov. You must use your self to such things, Husband and Wife, were not made to lye Eternally together.

Wood. Why, Mr. Lovechange, what other use can you put your self to a nights?

Lov.

Lov. I thank ye for that Faith—What—then to lye with my own Wife? as I take it, there were no Articles between you, and I, to leave off any part of my former Trade, as Drinking, Gaming—

Wood. And Whoring.

Lov. Nay, my Dear, as for that—believe me, I have left it quite off. A man that has a Wife so experienc'd as thou art, so kind, so willing a Wife, faith I think he were worse then a Tyger to abuse thee; thou hast all my stock, believe me dear Soul.

Wood. Which is a very small one.

Lov. Faith a Man, that drinks, and Games, can't be very brisk that way.

Wood. Drinking was ever counted an Enemy to our Sex, but pray Sir how does gaming abuse it?

Lov. Why faith, if a Man has ill luck, as likely I have—What with Fretting, Swearing, Damming, and throwing, my Spirits disperse, which shou'd retire to the place you wot on.

Wood. You think any excuse may serve for a Wife, all this, may make you unkind at home, but do the Ladies abroad find your fretting, Damming, Swearing, and throwing, disperse Nature in you?

Lov. Ah! I see where the Worm bites, thou art politickly jealous of me.

Wood. Oh sye! Jealors? (that were a fault indeed) of one so kind, so just, and true a Husband as you are Mr. Lovechange.

Lov. Thou hast said all in a word, Egad I wou'd not change thee for the finest Miss in Town.

Wood. Yes, there is a certain Lady, that for a Night, you did not care, if you made an exchange with.

Lov. Who I? I defy the World.

Wood. You have not been to Night, with the dearest, the finest Woman?

Lov. How! 'Slife, this comes home to me.

Wood. Who I! I've been Drinking, and Gaming, away with these jealous Fopperies.

Wood. You were more oblig'd to the kind shades in St. James's Park, than to the Moon, who's light perhaps might have discover'd your error.

Lov

Lov. O confound her! all's out, how came she to know it? *(aside)*
Wood. What are you studying for an excuse? a lye to put me off with?

Lov. I will out-face her. *(aside)*
 Now art thou as mad, as blind Love and Jealousie can make thee, prithee to Bed and settle thy Brain, go —

Wood. Mr. Lovechange, I have no other end in this, more then to let you know your error, and that I am sensible of the indignity, take notice I knew of your meeting at the Duck-Pond side, and shall reward your kindness. *(She offers to go out.)*

Lov. Duck-Pond side?
 Stay, I grow serious, that I have infinite obligations to thee; I must ever own, and I had nothing to return you back, but this bare substance, and a gratitude, and what the heats of youth may prompt me too I can't tell; But when you ask me truly what they are I will inform your knowledge, and what you charge me with of this nights action, believe me Madam, is false information, I saw no woman, by the Duck-Pond side.

Wood. How can I credit this? and yet I shou'd believe him, *(aside)* perhaps my eyes inform'd me of your falshood, I am not apt to credit evil Tongues.

Lov. Oh don't pursue an error, to my prejudice; upon my Honour; by all the vows of sacred Love, and Marriage, I was not near that place, but something I remember past last night, 'twixt whom I know not, that perhaps deceiv'd you. Ile search it out and satisfy your Jealousie.

Wood. Oh Heavens! if this be true what thing am I? *(aside)*

Lov. Come don't vex thy self with peevishness, don't create these ills, that will torment thee. Ile satisfy thy doubt, believe me Dear.

Wood. Oh I am ruin'd, *(aside)* if he be not false, how hard a fate is mine--- Ile take your word Sir. *[Exit Lovechange]*

Clare. For Heavens sake, Madam keep your courage up, for if you have Cuckold my Master by — mistake, 'tis the best way to put as good a face on't, as you can, there's no recalling it. Lord what a business you make of a thing that is not worth speaking of.

Wood. But guilt's a strange thing *Clare.*

Clare. Why you don't believe him sure, can all your senses fail you, or will you credit him, in spite of 'em all, you saw, you heard, and felt too, as you say.

Wood. They were all prepar'd to receive him, without any other imagination, and might be easily deceiv'd.

Clare. But since there's no possibility of any other Person's coming then his, you ought not to give your faith so easily. But Madam, here comes Mr. Courtwell, who will perhaps discover more.

Wood. Shame, and Confusion, will not let me hear him.

[Exit with Clare]

Enter Courtwell,

Court. Now, wou'd I give the world to know this Woman's name, and abode, these curiosities, don't usually last after enjoyment, one wou'd have thought I had glutted my self of Woman-kind for these two days, and of her for ever, but 'twas a sweet plump active Rogue. 'Slife, yonder's the Rogue Love-

change, he looks like a defeated Lover — [Enter Lovechange pensive.] But what the Devil makes him here at the Widdows, well a rich Widdow is the very sink of younger Brothers, and harbours more then a Gaming house, I don't like his being here though, it looks like Rivalship, and though it be but Justice in him, yet I can by no means permit it. It makes me angry -- Why how now Lovechange, methinks thou look'st melancholly upon't, what no hope from the Widdow? for I perceive you Rival me.

Lov. Oh trouble not your head with the Widdow, you may remember I told ye she was not for your turn.

Court. Are you sure of that?

Lov. Most certain.

Court. And are you the Man, the happy Man,

Lov. Why, what exceptions have you against me, what, Ile warrant, you thought the noise of Lands, and Joyntures wou'd have carried it, but know Will, that Wit, and Parts are greater Motives.

Court. And does your conceit Edward I. perswade you to the belief, that you are so qualify'd?

Lov. Faith, I never studied that, but the Ladies are kind, and do tell me of some such charms I am Master of.

Court. The Lady too Ned, that you met in the Park, she has, that goodness for you too, hah!

Lov.

Lov. She is satisfy'd, and that's sufficient.

Court. I hope she was, for I did my best. Lord *Ned*, that thou shou'd'st be so simple, to believe thy self Master of all hearts. All the Ladies submit to you dear *Ned*, so did the Lady in the *Mall*, did she not; But there was a Man, (though not so considerable as you Sir) that pleas'd her better by the Duck-Pond side, and perhaps may make as good an interest in her, as you have in the Widdows heart, you guess the Man, and so farewell *Ned*, farewell, ha, ha, ha.

[*Offers to go out:*

Lov. Prithee stay, Egad thou art pleasant company my dear Soul; and was there say you? was there such a spark? that did the feat so well at the Duck-Pond side? ha, ha, ha?

Court. I am glad you are so merry Sir.

Lov. Faith, I can't forbear being infinitely pleas'd to find my friend so happy, I am glad I know this secret, I might have wanted the means to have convinc'd my Wife else, that 'twas not I, but I wonder who the Devil the Lady shou'd be, surely some one taken with my Person, and that had a certain longing — and how *Will*, and how did you find her? for I am willing to communicate my blessings.

Court. Why hadst thou ever enjoy'd her?

Lov. In truth not, nor never will for ought I know.

Court. You seem'd yesterday to praise her to the Skies, and is she falln so low in your opinion.

Lov. She that I spoke of, was, and is the same, and nothing but Age, can alter her from being the finest, sweetest Person in the World.

Court. I found her so, (*aside*) and in her arts of Love, so ravishing--

Lov. And was she brisk that way, say you? *Will*.

Court. To a miracle, I can't contain my joy, I must discover all--- and now dear *Lovechange* if thou wou'dst let me know her name, and quality?

Lov. By my troth Sir, if I could serve you this way, you might command me; But you are already happy enough, be not too glorious with it.

Court. What humour's this, I can't understand him, but *Clare* must be my guide ——— Your Servant Sir, since you are so fantastique.

Lov. Your Servant dear *Will*, ha, ha.

Exit Lovechange.

Enter Perigreen dressing him.

Court. I cannot comprehend this Fellow's fancy, now I am for the Widdow, whom I must gain in spite of all her peevishness, I know she has no aversion to my Person, and though I don't love her much, yet, my Pride obliges me to come off Conquerour, but oh this other lovely, kind, obliging Stranger.

Per. Oh excess of Treachery!

Court. Who's here, ere another Rival? Pox on 'em, how they swarm about a rich Widdow, 'Slife, I think he's dressing himself.

Per. Sure *Courtwell* loves this Lady, for methinks he is very active, how shall I accost him, how as a stranger shall I begin a discourse to him? Ile pretend I am his Rival. *(aside)*

Court. Your Servant Sir.

Per. Yours Sir, proceed if you have ought with me?

Court. You look and talk Sir, as if you were *Major Domo*.

Per. It may be Sir I am, will that afflict you?

Court. My name is *Courtwell* Sir, and I pretend to the Lady of this Mansion.

Per. Very likely! but whether she will fall to your share or not, is a great question.

Court. Not to be made by a School-boy, pretty Lad, hast any nickers, or cherry-stones? if thou hast, there be Children of thy own size without, will hold thee play.

Per. Oh Sir, Ile give you leave to be witty with my youth, whilst I laugh at your gravity, and wisdom. In short Sir, if the Lady likes the Boy, better than your Manhood, you'll find cold entertainment, go Sir, take this answer, she is not for your turn, go Sir, you loose your time, there is a certain kind, obliging Lady.

Court. Oh the Devil have they that story by the end too? Well this *Clare* has betraid me, however this little diminutive Man, sha' not affront me, yet hang't he's a child not worth my malice.

[Offers to go.]

Per. Hold Sir, you pass no further this way, that leads you to the door.

Court. Prith hee unhand me youth, thou'lt make me angry, and then I were too blame, with so much innocence.

Per.

Per. None of your put off's Sir, I am not so young, nor innocent, as you take me to be; I can do many things that wou'd proclaim me Man, don't upbraid the smoothness of my Chin, my Sword's as rough as thine, and I dare draw it.

Court. Very pretty. Lord how it rattles, why little talking Monsieur, by what authority do you resist me? can that fair Face disguise it self in anger? and that's the most that thou canst do, let's see thee frown, that perhaps wou'd break a Ladies heart, a soft, young silly Lady, but I make sport at thee, ha, ha, ha.

Per. What shall I do, to raise his anger up? For I had rather that way meet my Death, then see him in the embraces of another: That will but kill me a more cruel way. [*aside*] Come Sir, though you are pleas'd, I can be angry, you shall find the effects on't, but this is no place to decide the business in, Ile meet you in the Park, a pass, or two will end the fatal difference.

Court. Sure he has some other motive then the love of the Widow, that carries him to this rashness, the Boy grows angry, serious, and can fight perhaps. [*aside*]

Per. No consideration Sir, if you refuse to fight me, I will Pisto-
ye, take your choice to live with Honour, or to dye with Infamy.

Court. Well Sir, Ile meet you there, but don't care for fighting with thee much.

Per. I have Conditions too for Peace, as well as War, and love fighting, as little as you, I'me glad he consents to go out o'th house, I don't care to have my story known to any but himself, who onely can relieve me.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

The End of the third Act.

Actus

Actus Quartus, Scena Prima.

Scene Easy's house.

Enter Mrs. Easy, and Peg.

Peg. **O** H dear Madam, what shall we do for *Mrs. Grace*, I vow she is in the lamentablest taking nay, and a worse matter then that, my old Master is resolv'd to fright her out of her wits, till she consent to marry *Sir Ralph*.

Mrs. Easy. Why I thought he had by mistake married *Betty*.

Peg. So he did Madam, but they design to put her off for a peice of money, it being a cheat, and without a License; and *Betty* offers for a thousand pound to sit down with the loss, and release him to *Mrs. Grace*, but all this does not satisfie, for *Mrs. Grace* is refractory, and will by no means consent.

Mrs. Easy. Poor *Grace*, what contrivance shall we think of, to release her from her bondage and torment.

Peg. Alas Madam, if that were the worst, but her Uncle designs this morning to let out some of her hot blood, as he calls it, he has sent for a Surgeon, and pretending she is mad, means to try conclusions by opening a vein, or two.

Mrs. Easy. He dares not be so cruel, and inhumane.

Peg. I suppose he dares not design so ill a thing indeed, but she being very young, and innocent, will soon (at least he thinks so) be brought to yeild to any thing, rather then be so us'd, but Madam I have thought of a stratagem; when my Master sends out for a Surgeon, Ile let you see my wit, I will not tell you before hand.

Mrs. Easy. Thou art so excellent at contrivance, that I will not question the success, nor ask thee what it is, go on and prosper; but call upon me by and by for a Letter, that I intend to write to *Love-change*.

Exeunt severally.

Scene

Scene Second, Chairs set out.

Enter Mr. Easy, Grace, Betty, and Sir Ralph.

Mr. Easy. This, is your place of execution, consider, repent, and be sav'd.

Sir Ralph. I, I, Mrs. *Grace*, that's your safest way, tis very ill lying in a cold grave this Winter time, a Bed, and a good Bedfellow were much better, consider, consider, I vow my heart bleeds to think how you will suffer for love of me.

Grace. What shall I do *Betty*, is there no way left for my deliverance?

Betty. Do not fear it Madam, *Leg*, and I, have laid our heads together for your relief, however make all the signs of fear you can. [*aside*

Grace. I know not what can relieve me, but I will hope well, good Uncle, what if you'd have me do? how can I marry with a man that is already married?

Mr. Easy. Aye, by your contrivance Baggage he is, but thou shalt suffer severely for't, and this Slut I will make dance a new Galliard in *Bridewell*.

Betty. Truly Sir I don't fear you, but for my poor Mistress sake I wou'd do any thing but loose my Husband.

Sir Ralph. Oh! I had rather hear a Schreech-Owl than that voice, Husband quotha? I defie thee.

Betty. Why Sir, I have youth and beauty enough to be a Lady.

Sir Ralph. Why I tell thee I care not, and thou wert the Devil, so thou hadst money, oh I am distracted to think that I shou'd loose six thousand pound, and Mrs. *Grace*.

Grace. You hear Sir, there's all his grief to loose the money.

Mr. Easy. I like him the better for't, — Well you will beg pardon and be receiv'd to mercy?

Grace. First Sir, let me see Sir *Ralph* free from *Betty*, for I confess I wou'd not marry a man that shou'd be in danger of the Gallows.

Sir Ralph. Oh how I tremble at that word, I, I, pray good Uncle, let me be freed from this little Jilt here, and then I do not fear my fate as they say with Mrs. *Grace*, nay if thou dost not release me I will give

give thee no money, nor no consolation, thou shalt 'en live by thy wits, and thou wilt for *Ralph*.

Betty. I am well enough satisfy'd to part upon good consideration.

Sir Ralph. What be they, what be they, any Condition.

Betty. Only giving me a thousand pound Sir.

Sir Ralph. How! a thousand pound? Mercy upon us!

Betty. I cannot live by my Wits, and therefore —

Sir Ralph. Thou wilt ruine me, a thousand pound?

Betty. You will loose six by the bargain Sir, in loosing my Mistress.

Mr. Easy. That's well consider'd I confess; But will nothing less, then that mighty sum suffice you.

Betty. By no means, for Sir I must marry, I wou'd not fall much lower then a Lady ship.

Sir Ralph. O insatiable Woman! a thousand pound! why pray Mrs. *Betty* be good and merciful.

Betty. I have said, and will hold there Sir, or keep my Title.

Sir Ralph. I am not able to endure the thoughts of parting with so much money —

Mr. Easy. Come Sir *Ralph*, since there's no other way, you know Mr. *Lovechange* owes you a thousand pound, give her that Bond, and it shall be sufficient.

Betty. I am content to take it Sir, but will Mr. *Lovechange* pay me, is it a good debt?

Sir Ralph. Ile secure it good, here, here's the Bond, take it — and with it my curse.

Here's an after-clap indeed, had I had any thing for my Money, it wou'd not have griev'd me. (cries)

Mr. Easy. Come Sir, it can't be hope, this tis to have to do with any of their Sex. But here's *Grace* to make you amends with, take her.

Grace. Hold Sir, two words to that bargain.

Mr. Easy. Refractory still! I will shew no mercy on thee, Sir *Ralph* keep her here, whilst I see if the Surgeon beent come that I sent for?

[Exit *Easy*]

Sir Ralph. Sweet Mrs. *Grace* consent without compulsion as they say, for I protest but that I have given a thousand pounds towards thee, I wou'd rather give you over, then see you suffer any hurt for me, therefore pray be civil a little, though it be against your inclinations to be so.

Grace

Grace. I shall not consent.

Enter Mr. Easy, and Amorous, dressed as a Surgeon.

Mr. Easy. Here Sir, here's your Patient, and though she looks so soberly at present, she's stark mad poor Soul.

(cries.

And because of her Quality, I am loath to have her to Bedlam, if any Cure may be had otherwise.

Grace. Sir forbear, I am not mad, nor will be so unless you make me.

[Amorous holds her, and feels her Pulse.]

Amor. Alas good Lady, you be troubled wit de Love, wit de vere great extravagance, you be very much distemper.

Grace. You be very much de Coxcomb Sir.

Mr. Easy. Aye, now she begins, come, come, to bleeding of her, is not that very good?

Amor. We', we', ver' necessar, come Lady.

Grace. Thou inhumane fellow, think'st thou indeed I'me distemper'd, and need thy cure, or if I were so, that thou hast any skill? Yet once you sed that Love was my Disease, and that indeed was truth.

(weeps

Amor. Vat Complexion be de Man of dat you love, and dat can be cruel to so very amiable a Person.

Grace. He is not cruel, but my Uncle is, and with your help designs to kill me sure, do so, for since I cannot marry Amorous I do desire to dye.

(weeps.

Mr. Easy. See Sir, how her fit alters, she'l laugh agen anon, I pray Sir be speedy.

Sir Ralph. I am not able to see her blood, and therefore must withdraw.

[Exit Sir Ralph.]

Amor. Come Madamose, you must permit me to do something to cure your amours, let me see, she must be ry'd to dis Chey'r, let me try it first.

(sits down

Dis is not very convenient Sir, 'tis too hard, and metinks too litel.

Mr. Easy. 'Tis well, 'tis well Sir, pray to your business.

Amor. No indeed Sir, 'tis not good, make you de experiment pray, and see if 'tis convenient.

(Old Easy sits down.

Mr. Easy. Cocks bodikins, these villanous Outlandish-Men make such a pudder, an English Man wou'd have kill'd you half a score, whilst you cure one.

(Offers to rise, Amorous holds him down.

H

Amor.

Amor. Help to bind him fast Boy.

*They bind him
in the Chair.*

Mr. Easy. What d'ye mean Gentlemen?

Amor. Only to tye you up to your good Behaviour a little.

Grace. Oh happy deliverance! *Amorous* is it you?

Amor. Yes, and do you shift for your self, and leave me to handle him.

[Exit Grace,

Mr. Easy. Villains, unhand me, oh thou Monster *Amorous*, is it thou?

Amor. Even I Sir, I am turn'd surgeon to serve you Sir, come strip up his Arms, and let us bleed him speedily. I have a drench here that must be given first, 'twil make him bleed like one of twenty.

[Pours down something.

Mr. Easy. Oh I am kill'd, I am murther'd.

Amor. No, you are not to dye so patiently.

Mr. Easy. Yes, I will dye on purpose that thou may'st be hang'd: no help near? Wife, *Grace*, *Betty*, Murther, murther!

Enter Sir Ralph, Jo, and other Servants.

Amor. Ah Pox of his bauling, I must shift for my self now.

Mr. Easy. Oh are you caught Sir, I shall handle you now, 'tis the Rogue *Amorous*.

Sir Ralph. *Amorous*, how came he in?

Amor. How shall he get out, oh the Devil —

Sir Ralph. Have I got ye i' faith into my Clutches? Dear Uncle, leave his punishment to me, I have a Servant here that has the noblest Hed-piece for Villany that ever was.

Mr. Easy. Do any thing to him, that may torment him soundly, have no mercy on him, sweet *Sir Ralph*.

Sir Ralph. I warrant ye Uncle, I have a brave place to put him into, and will have him bastinado'd thrice a day for Recreation, till I have mortify'd his Love.

Amor. Fool, I do despise, and dare thy worst of evils, were *Grace* but safe, oh I shou'd be content to suffer, I'me sure they dare not murther me.

Sir Ralph. Yes *Grace* shall be safe, and my Wife within this hour; thou shalt never see her face more.

Amor. Devil do thy worst!

Sir Ralph. Here *Jo*, take him into thy Custody, let him be put into the Vault, let silence and darkness be his Companions.

Jo.

Jo. Come Sir, along with me Sir, I shall teach you't he art of Surgery.

Sir Ralph. Nay, if thou escap'st now, Ile say thou had'st a Witch to thy Mother, and a Devil to thy Father. *Exeunt severally*

Scene the Park.

Enter Courtwell and Perigreen from fighting, Perigreen wounded

Court. Rash Boy! to force me to this rudeness, for 'twas not manhood in me thus to hurt thee, alas, thou cou'dst not fight, thou hadst no skill to hold thy weapon for thy own advantage.

Per. Sir you have done enough if it be home.

Court. Sure thou art some poor despairing thing that seek'st a Death from any hand, why did'st thou chuse out mine, for that base action, there are a thousand Murtherers, Ruffins, things desperate as thy self, that wou'd have done this, with the least provocation, why didst thou chuse a Gentleman?

Per. Thou a Gentleman? cou'd any thing, that is not basely born, commit such villanies as thou hast done, ere since thou call'dst thy self a Man?

Court. Come don't talk, but let me lead thee to a Surgeon.

Enter Mrs Woodbee, and Clare.

Wood. Mr. Perigreen and Courtwell say you? how in the name of wonder shou'd they come to fall out?

Clare. Nay, I know not Madam, but I believe 'twas about you.

Wood. Me? But see Clare where they are—

Per. Curse on her for coming now, a little time might have discover'd all.

Court. I'm glad she has releas'd me.

Wood. Gentlemen, I heard of some difference between you, and thought it but Justice to prevent further danger.

Court. 'Twas well, and charitably perform'd, Widdow, but I suppose 'twas care of your new Gallant here that hastned you.

Wood. Oh villanous Courtwell! what hast thou done! the poor youth bleeds—alas, Sir, lets haste for some relief?

Court. Widdow I have a word with you, before you go.

Wood. I have nothing to say to you, and forbear.

Exeunt Clare and Perigreen.

Court. But I must stay you for a small season to tell you Widdow you are a —

Wood. What thou Impertinent?

Court. A strange inconstant, faithless, amorous thing, whom I have now thrown from my heart.

Wood. Have you so Sir?

Court. Yes; and to make thee wretched, know I love elsewhere?

Wood. Yes sir, your new Lady perhaps, which you met last night in the Mall.

Court. How! I did not think thou hadst been arriv'd to the years of Witchcraft yet, Widdow?

Wood. There needs none to know your secrets sir, one need but have the faculty of hearing well, to know 'em all, for you are loud enough in the Proclamation of 'em.

Court. Now are all my hopes dash'd here, this must be *Clare*, or *Lovechange*, the last I believe, purposely to ruine all my expectations with the Widdow, that Rascal I must fight, [*aside*] truth is I did meet a Lady in the Mall, a fine handsome airy Rogue.

Wood. And was she kind to o?

Court. Wondrous kind, nay of her self, so wittily found out the place of entertainment, and made the treat too, when she came there.

Wood. How sir! were you in any House?

Court. House? no, we enjoy'd our selves like the gods of old, in Groves, and Gloomy shades, on Rivers Banks, faith Widdow, to kill thee quite, I met a Lady on the Duck-Pond side, that would have fir'd an Anchoret:

Wood. How sir? by the Duck-Pond side, thou'lt kill me indeed, if thou undeceiv'st me not presently? [*aside*]

Court. Even there — since *Lovechange*, has told her Ile do his business for him.

[*aside*]
I must confess the blessing was not design'd for me, but *Lovechange*, I dress'd my self as like as possible, — and took all she said to him, on my self.

Wood. Oh I am ruin'd! and was she easily won sir? for perhaps I know the Lady — Oh how curious I am to know my own dishonour.

[*aside*]

Court.

Court. I do suppose *Lovechange* had prepar'd her, for to me she made but weak resistance, she said 'twas well the darkness hid her blushes, and that the Bench was a very undecent place.

Wood. My very words! Oh I could kill the Rascal! what different passions is my Soul possess'd with! *(aside)*

Courtwell, thou art a Villain, this Lady I know, and thou hast abus'd her honour, not won her heart, and all the rest was but a Rape, a base unworthy Rape, and one perhaps that shall be reveng'd.

[Exit Mrs. Woodbee]

Court. By this light the Widdow loves me, I know it by her Jealousie, perhaps this may be the critical minute, I'll follow her and try my chance: Perhaps too I may learn something from this young Bully that may explain this Riddle to me. *[Exit Courtwell.]*

The Widdow's House, Enter Lovechange.

Low. How shall I contrive to see my dear Mistress? For I am not able to live without her, though I am a damn'd mad fellow, and love all her Sex in generall, yet in her is bounded all my love and pleasure—Pox on't, I am damn'd dull at Invention.

Enter Clare.

Clare. What melancholly after his Gaming? Well I hope I may trust my self alone with him to day, therefore I'll venture in. *[aside]* What Sir, in a doleful dump? what would you give to be put out on't now.

Low. Prithee good property of my Wife, leave me.

Clare. Faith Sir, I would have a word or two in private with you first.

Low. Pox on't, thou wouldst not be so forward if I desir'd thy Company now.

Clare. What will you say now, and I'll tell you what you are thinking on.

Low. Not of your late cruelty to me *Clare*! nor care I a farthing if you are come to offer me, what you then deny'd me, and therefore leave me.

Clare. Faith Sir, I have not the heart to obey you till I have left you in better humour, come Sir!

Low. If I should trust a secret with thee *Clare*, thou wouldst be blabbing it to my Wife.

Clare. You can trust me with nothing but what I know already Sir!

Low. Faith 'tis not unlikely!

Clare. I am acquainted Sir, with all your last nights Intrigue.

Lou. The Devil thou art — and like a wicked Jade, thou hast inform'd my Wife.

Clare. And is that the cause of your affliction?

Lou. That's all, that's all, but *Clare* was it kindly done to turn a base Informer here at home, just thus it had been hadst thou been kind to me, on my Conscience, thou wou'dst have told thy Mistress on't.

Clare. I hope you don't think me so simple Sir.

Lou. Thou never consider'st the evil consequences *Clare*, of carrying Tales? now must my daily allowance be shortned, now must I drudge at home, for the expences of my Whoring abroad, nay and perhaps be chain'd up like a Mastiff dog all day, to make me more fierce a nights: well *Clare*, if I am forc'd to keep home for want of stock, and kept fasting, the whole force of my hungry love will fall most heavily on thee, and I will shew thee no more mercy, then thou hast done to me.

Clare. I don't fear you Sir, since you were with so fine a Lady last night.

Lou. I am found out, they know my Roguery, and have mistook the place only but that's enough to ruine me. (*aside*) But *Clare* — Is there no hopes of a forgiveness? no making up of this breach? Methinks you shou'd follow the greatest examples, that forgive all faults confest with penitence, I must confess, I had a Lady, *Clare*.

Clare. Oh, wicked Man! how stily he deny'd this to my Lady to day! Well Sir, what will you give me to absolve this sin, and restore you to my Mistresses grace again?

Lou. Give thee? Why my heart, thou shalt command me.

Clare. Why then Sir, 'twas even my Mistress, and your own Wife that met you at the Dock-Pond side:

Lou. What? the Dock-Pond side?

Clare. I Sir, and in *St. James's Park*, where you were kinder to her, than ever you were before.

Lou. Ours! my Wife?

Clare. Yes, your Wife, don't disturb your self, 'twas but one nights loss to you, and that sure you may afford for all she has done for you: faith Sir, we know of your Intrigue, and were resolv'd to counterplot ye, ha, ha, ha.

Lou.

Low. Devil! why dost laugh?

Clare. To think how safe you fancy'd your self to be in the Arms of Mrs. Easy.

Low. Oh Curse! I am miserable both ways, not only to find my self Cuckolded by *Courtwell* (*aside*) but to have this discovery of my love made to my dear *Easy*.

Clare. What, are you disorder'd still? Troth, I think you may be glad to make your peace on any terms.

Low. One comfort I have yet left, I'm releas'd from the slavery of my Wife by knowing I am a Cuckold, and that shall secure the credit too of my dear Mistress whose Honour's now in danger, this secret too, 'tis fit I find some way to let her know, and consult how to prevent a further growth, and thou *Courtwell* shalt feel the effects of my displeasure.

[*Exit Lovechange.*]

Clare. O Lord, what have I done! he talks as if it were not he that met my Mistress, but *Courtwell*, I am quite undone, 'Tis so by my Maiden-head, if I cou'd be serious now, I cou'd cry, and fret my self into a Consumption, for this unlucky mistake of mine, which I dare not discover to my Lady neither, she has vexation enough already without this addition, oh that I cou'd bring all about again?

[*Exit Clare.*]

Mr. Easy's house, Enter Sir Ralph and Jo.

Jo. Oh Sir! I have excellent news for you, the lost sheep is found, I have taken your Mistress Sir, just as she was marching off with all her Moveables, her Jewels, and other Toys, and Sir I have her fast.

Sir Ralph. Where?

Jo. In a certain convenient dark Lodging, which her Uncle provided for her, where she shall fast and pray, till her stomach come down to marry you Sir.

Sir Ralph. Aye *Jo*, would I had her? that is her money, for she is very beautiful that way. *Jo*, but heark ye I wou'd fain see her, I know her mind, for 'tis a pretty little Rogue.

Jo. Sir, I can do you that favour, for her Uncle has committed the Key to my charge, with a command that none but you shall see her.

[*Exit Jo.*]

Jo.

Jo Re-enters with Grace *Why I live!*

Sir Ralph. So *Mrs. Grace*, what is your stomach come down or not?
Grace. No, nor never will to thee, had you lov'd me, you could not have suffer'd me to be us'd thus for your sake, a Gentleman wou'd have desist'd, after so much aversion as I have shewn you.

Sir Ralph. Pshaw, whaw, tell not me of desisting, nor aversions as I have shewn ye. *Mrs. Grace*, you are a Fool, and don't know so well as your Uncle and I, what's good for you, I have two thousand pound a year, and I am a Knight, and all that, and keep my Gilt Coach, and five livery men — and *Amorous* has scarce a shilling for a dirty Hack.

Jo. My Master speaks reason to you Lady.

Grace. Your Master and you, are a couple of lots, impertinent Fools. I hate ye both, and wou'd not marry him, though I shou'd perish there, whence you draw me now, 'Tis Paradise compar'd to where thou art.

Sir Ralph. Oh Rave! oh rich! what, you can rant, and scold, one wou'd have thought I now that Butter wou'd not melt in her mouth.

Grace. You'll make me rave, you will, and I will Rave too, you can't tye my tongue up, that's still free to curse you with.

Jo. Toes, here's fine doings.

Sir Ralph. Jo, carry her down, she may be tame ere night.

Grace. Do what thou wilt, thou shalt never bring me to be tame enough for thee: this dark, this solitary Cave best suits my absent Love, here I contemplate, here my thoughts are free, and like a little Bird I'll sit, and sing a melancholly note within my little Cave.

Sir Ralph. I do what you will, we shall change your note, fear it not. *[Exit Sir Ralph]*

Jo, puts her down.

Jo. So, now you are fast agen, well I am a cruel Rogue, for all this though, what can find no remorse.

Amor. How now Goaler, what black deed are you a doing there? *[Enter Amorous]*

Jo. Only a putting your Mistress into her hole Sir.

Amor. My Mistress there, thou art not so barbarous?

Jo. Indeed I am Sir.

Amor. Was it for this your kindness brought me out, and chang'd my

my Lodging for this opener place to bury her in; Dog, set her loo se or by the sacred passion I have for that fair Maid Ile strangle thee.

Jo. Say you so Sir, you had better let me alone though, heark Sir, she's well contented with her retirement. [Grace sings below.

Amor. Oh charming Virgin, how thy innocence can make thy entertainment, firrah deliver the Key, or thou'rt dead.

Jo. Stand off Sir, I have a rusty Sword, and you have no weapon, stand off, or —

Amor. Slave dost dare me? —

{Runs into him, takes away
his Sword, and wounds him.

Jo. Oh I am dead, I am dead!
Stark Stone dead.

Amor. 'Slife I think the Rogue speaks truth, he's dead indeed, but if he be Ile justifie the action, stay, what am I next to do? In passing out perhaps I may be seen — I have devis'd a way for my escape, but first Ile release my fair Prisoner. [Unlocks the Vault, and enters.

Jo. Now if I durst stir, I wou'd get away and shew e'm such a trick-- but heark they are ascending, and I must lye purdue. (Lyes down again.

Amor. My Dearest! 'tis no time to expresse joy in, this fellow I fear is dead, and we have both need of a safe retreat, here's the Key of the Gate to the Feilds, get you out, and go the back way to my Aunts, 'tis but six doors off, you know she'l receive you well, whilst I escape another way.

Grace. My dearest Amorous, take care of what I love, and let me see thee quickly releast from this base Mansion, where naught but terrour dwells. [Exit Grace.

Amor. Come Sir, I have a word or two with you in the next room, Ile put on this Rogue's disguise, and that will be a means for my escape. Exit Amorous dragging out Jo by the heels

Enter Mrs. Easy.

Mrs. Easy. This Wench stays very long, I hope she has found my dear Lovechange. [Enter Mr. Easy, peeping after his Wife.

Mr. Easy. My heart tells me there is something a forging, but what I know not, perhaps I may know more. [Enter Peg not seeing Easy

Peg. Madam, here's the answer to your Letter.

Mr. Easy. How! a Letter to my Wife?

gently good supporters, gently.

{As Peg and Mrs. Easy stands to read
the Letter, he steals behind them & with
his Spectacles reads over their shoulders

Mrs. Easy. Why didn't thou stay so long? It grows late, and I am impatient to be gone to Lovechange. I Mr. Easy.

Mr. Easy. O rare! is it thereabouts with you? [aside]
 Peg. I vow Madam, he kept me there so long — asking me questions about you, kissing your dear Letter, and sending so many recommendations to you, and so many curses to my old Master.

Mrs. Easy. Fine, delicate young Bawd. [aside]

Mrs. Easy. I had rather he shou'd wish him well Peg. Thars in Heaven.

Mr. Easy. Hum, hum, charitable, kind Wife. [aside]

Mrs. Easy. But to my Letter, dear Lovechange let me kiss thee, before I read thee. [kisses the Letter, and reads.]

Mr. Easy. Excellent! [aside]

Mrs. Easy. Alas Peg, we are all undone, Lovechange can't meet me at Mrs. Woodbee's to night, for reasons he will tell me anon; but how anon dear Peg, and where? for I am not able to live this night without him.

Peg. That too, I have to tell you by word of mouth.

Mr. Easy. O horrid impudence! [aside]
 Are you not so Mistress, nay never stare, 'tis I, even I, the poor old Cuckold, that you with so well too.

Mrs. Easy. O sad! What shall I do?

Mr. Easy. No evasions, no lyes shall serve you, come I will lock thee up from all humane society, and have no mercy on thee.

Mrs. Easy. Dear Husband!

Mr. Easy. Dear Devil! For such, and so severe Ile be unto thee.

[pulls her in.]

Peg. Now all the Plot's spoil'd, this will go hard with my poor Mistress, Ile try my Wit once more for her deliverance, for I wou'd not have her disappoint Mr. Lovechange's expectations, she must meet him to night.

[Exit Peg.]

Enter Sir Ralph, and two Fellows with Battoons.

Sir Ralph. Come Brothers of the Battoon, open that door, for there's the subject of your mirth, oh how we will swinge the Rascal, and do you hear Bulleys, you must be sure you beat him, till he resign (before you that are my Witnesses) Mrs. Grace to me.

1 Fel. I warrant you Sir, [They draw aside the Curtain and discover Jo sitting in a chair, dress'd in Amorous his cloathes.]
 for your business done.

Jo. Sure 'tis the Rascal Amorous return'd to make me sure, therefore to my counterfeiting.

[aside] [sits still.] Sir Ralph

Sir Ralph. There he sits, Gentlemen to your business.

Jo. 'Tis so, there's no resistance to be made.

Sir Ralph. But first let me take him into examination, come sirrah answer me precisely to these particulars, first how long have you commenc'd Doctor of Divinity (for all is out) how came you to marry me to Mrs. Betty? a pox of your sanctify'd cause, 'thas cost me a thousand pounds good *English* Money.

Jo. 'Tis Sir Ralph my Master.

Sir Ralph. No reply sirrah, next you quitted the long Robe, and transform'd your self to a *French* Doctor, a plague of your Physick, as my Uncle may say. And lastly, sirrah you wou'd have cheated me of Mrs. Grace, for which three enormities I will chastise thee most abundantly. [They beat him

Jo. Hold Sir, what do you mean Sir?

Sir Ralph. Bind him fast Gentlemen.

Jo. I am not *Amorous* Sir, a pox of my Vizard, I can't get it off.

Sir R. Stop his mouth Gentlemen, for so he serv'd my Nuncle Easy.

Jo. I am not *Amorous* Sir, but, but ———

Sir Ralph. Stop his mouth I say, have no mercy on him, so now bastinado him soundly. [They beat him, he cries out the while.

Jo. Murther, murther, I am dead, and you shall all be hang'd.

Overtums the Chair and falls down.

Sir Ralph. Oh Gentlemen he's dead indeed, what shall we do now?

1 Fel. We care not Sir, if he be dead, we shan't be hang'd for him, 'tis only you shall suffer, who set us on:

Sir Ralph. Here be rare Rogues, no life? no he's gone, quite gone! oh what shall I do? a pox of Mrs. Grace, and all her Race, accurst I may say.

1 Fel. Farewel Sir, we'll shift for our selves.

[Exit Rogues.

Sir Ralph. Ile go hide my self somewhere from the hands of Justice.

Ah Grace, 'tis thou'rt the cause of all my dolour,

But how shall I escape the Hempen Collar.

Exit.

The End of the fourth Act.

Actus Quintus, Scena Prima.

Enter Peg running, after her Sir Ralph.

Sir Ralph. Sweet Mrs. *Margaret* don't flye me, I protest Ile do you no harm, alas I'me in distress, and only beg thy assistance.

Peg. What's the matter *Sir Ralph*?

Sir Ralph. Oh I have committed, I dare not tell thee all.

Peg. What, Adultery? or Fornication *Sir*?

Sir Ralph. Neither, but a worse matter by much, I have kil'd Mr. *Amorous*, and desire you to conceal me a little, I dare not tell my Uncle?

Peg. *Amorous* I'me sure is safe enough, and so is *Gracy*, what can this fool mean? But I will now make use of him: well though I say it, I am full of device and contrivance: *cries*

This accident *Sir Ralph* is very unlucky, but if you will take my advice Ile secure you. *[aside]*

Sir Ralph. Oh any thing dear Mrs. *Margaret*.

Peg. And can you keep counsel too?

Sir Ralph. Yes sure, where my life depends on't?

Peg. You must then beg leave of my Master, to make a visit to my Mistress, she is kept a close Prisoner in her Chamber upon some Jealousie that's come into his Noddle, I know you may be admitted.

Sir Ralph. And what then?

Peg. Oh let me alone then to work for your safety; do this presently, and before the news of your killing *Amorous* arrive to his Ear.

Sir Ralph. I, I, Ile follow your counsel.

Peg. There must be something in't, where is the body of this dead Man? *cries*

Sir Ralph. In the apartment of the Garden, but pray say nothing and here's something to close thy mouth. *Exit Sir Ralph.*

Peg. So, I hope this Plot will take, I must next invent a way to let my Mistress know my design, and since I am not permitted to see her, Ile write by this Fop. *Exit Peg.*

Enter

Enter Mrs. Woodbee, and Clare.

Wood. What strange misfortune rules the fate of things, the first Revenge that ever I design'd, that it should so unhappily fall on my own head, 'tis too certain that I did meet *Courtwell* instead of my Husband: And 'tis as certain that he took me for *Mrs. Easy*, when I consider my condition, I find it every way so deplorable that without some extraordinary change, I shall grow weary of my Life, I am mad, and know not whom to be reveng'd on.

Clare. Faith Madam, carry on the Intrigue, and let's make a perfect Plot on't? *Enter Lovechange*

Here comes a principal Engineer in the work.

Lov. I can't meet this Rascal *Courtwell*, for though I don't love this foolish Woman, whose jealousy has made me a Cuckold: Yet i'm in honour bound to fight the Villain, 'twas happy as it prov'd, that 'twas not my dear Mistress, yet either way he merits my chastisement. [*aside*

Wood. Oh what shall I do? I have not power to withdraw. [*aside*

Clare. All this is my Roguery. [*aside*

Lov. Good Evening to you Madam.

Wood. Why this distance *Lovechange*?

Lov. Why these Tears?

Wood. For your unkindness Sir.

Lov. 'Tis rather Madam, for your own lewdness, come I will not entertain you with the circumstances, but to the business, I will part with you, you know the entertainment which you gave young *Courtwell* on the River-side i'th Park, I know it too, and wou'd have kil'd you for the deed, but that I know the offence ought to be charg'd on your curiosity, you thought to have met me there.

Wood. 'Tis true, and will you punish so severely a fault of Love, alas, I meant no harm.

Lov. 'Twas harm to be so curious, to be jealous, and harm to think of cheating me, for so't had been if I had met you there instead of *Mrs. Easy*, for I find you knew the design.

Wood. And are not you as guilty Sir, as I?

Lov. No, 'tis the scandal makes the sin, and not the action, custom makes it sin to us; when you offend, I bear the dishonour on't, when I, you but the little griefs. In fine, Madam I am resolv'd to part, none knows, as yet that we are married and if you please it may be still conceal'd.

Wood

Wood. I've nothing Sir to answer for my self, and since I can't have your heart, I am content to quit your Person too, you know the Articles between us Sir, when I married you, I made you Master of half my Fortune, take it, and what remains I will enjoy my self with, give me your hand — Farewel, I've had an ill bargain of thee, for a poor Months service, thou hast cost me ten thousand pounds. *Well* *Clare*, in this divorce some ease I find,

Since I am free, to *Courtwell* Ile be kind. *[Exit Clare and Wood.]*

Love. So, I have shook thee off, and with very little remorse too. Egad — Thou wer't a good Woman, but thou'rt gone — hang for row — Ile to my sweet, pretty, little, dear *Mrs. Easy*, and if she can but contrive to do as much for her Husband, as I've done for my Wife, we'll 'en strike up a match *A-la-mode.* *[Exit Lovechange]*

Enter Mrs. Easy dressed in Sir Ralph's cloaths, and Peg with her.

Peg. So, so, thus far it has succeeded well.

Mrs. Easy. I wou'd thou cou'dst but see the Knight dressed in my Night-gown, and Linnen, 'tis a sight worth the laughing at, I've charg'd him to sit very pensive, and dark, and to answer for me to every question ask't, if my Husband shou'd come to catechise him.

Peg. 'Twou'd be a Dialogue worth the hearkning too, he knowing nothing of your affairs — 'Tis like his answers must be very proper to the questions. *Enter Mr. Easy.*

Uds life Madam, here's my Master, what shall we do?

Mrs. Easy. Let me alone with him, 'tis pretty dark he can't well distinguish me.

Mr. Easy. Sir *Ralph*, when you askt me leave to give a visit to my Wife, I did not desire the doors shou'd have been shut upon you, I hearkned, and must tell you, I believe you were no better then you shou'd be.

Mrs. Easy. Truth is Sir, since you have found us out, I only pretended to *Mrs. Grace*, but your Wife was my main design.

Mr. Easy. How! Why thou impudent Varlet, oh horrible? dar'st thou make me a Cuckold? and tell me so? *first* I know thou art a Coward, and I will beat thee, yes I dare venture on thee. *Draws.*

Mrs. Easy. Nay, then 'tis time to shew a fair pair of heels, farewell Sir, Ile leave your house.

Mr. E. I will not let thee go so, if I have any daring in me. *[Exit Mrs. Easy.]*

Peg. Since I know she cannot fight, I'll after her, and see to call some body to her assistance. [runs out.]

Enter Lovechange as in a street.

Love. I see no light in my Mistress's Chamber, I wonder where they are all, and that *Peg* brings me no answer.

Enter Mrs. Easy running.

Mrs. Easy. *Lovechange*, dear, assist me!

Love. What the Devil art thou?

[Enter old Easy, and Peg.]

Mr. Easy. Oh thou Traytor to my house, have I trusted thee to this end, to rob me of my Wife and Honour?

Mrs. Easy. So, I have made fine work —

Love. Stay Sir, don't hurt him, for who e're he be, if he have wrong'd your Wife, I will revenge it, thy Arm's too weak for such a glorious deed.

Mr. Easy. Hey day! another Rival! oh I begin to see I am a most notorious Monster, I dare not encounter him though, but for thee thou villanous Sir *Ralph*. —

Love. Sir *Ralph* my Rival! — go Sir withdraw, this is not work for you, leave me to be your Champion.

Mr. Easy. Yes, yes, against my will I do — but I will home and claw my Wife, my fine whorish Wife, away for this. [Exit Easy]

Love. Now Sir, you and I, must have a touch.

Mrs. Easy. Or two I hope *Lovechange*, before we part.

Love. Are you so brisk Sir?

Mrs. Easy. You shall try that anon.

Love. Draw then Sir, for I am ready.

Mrs. Easy. Hold, hold, dear *Lovechange*, put up, we'll fight it out in another place.

Love. My noble Mistress.

Mrs. Easy. My dear *Lovechange* the same, stole our purposely to meet thee, my Husband has found out our Intrigue, and I dare return no more, I'll tell you all the story at large, let's halt — but whither?

Love. I have taken a private Lodging on purpose to night in a friends house, whom I can trust, fear nothing —

Mrs. Easy. But thy inconstancy, *Lovechange*.

Love. Sooner thy soul may change it's goodness and generosity, or any

any thing more impossible, come the Moons up, and we for our more security will go through the Park.

Exeunt omnes

Scene the Park, Enter Perigreen and Courtwell severally

Per. Here they say he's walking. I long to know the worst of my lad fate, tis strange he thou'd not know me, he's here — your Servant Sir.

Court. Yours Sir, have you forgiven my Mornings Complement? how does your wound Sir?

Per. Tis not troublesome.

Court. Pray Sir, tell me, and tell me seriously, what mov'd you to this rage against me? how came you to be angry? you told me something of *Camilla* too, which Sir, has made me thoughtful ever since, are you indeed acquainted with that Lady?

Per. Yes Sir, most intimately, there's nothing of her soul that's hid from me, she told me how she lov'd, and what false breath betray'd her to that weakness.

Court. Poor *Camilla*!

Per. Your pitty comes too late, for Sir she's dead, kil'd by your cruelty, which at once has rob'd the World, and me, of all we held most dear.

Court. Since she's gone, Ile put this penance on my self; Ile marry nothing that is young, or beautiful.

Per. But can you talk of marrying any?

Court. Why not Sir, whilst there be women and money to be had, and I suppose you will be of my mind too.

Enter Lovechange and Mrs. Easy.

Lov. Ha! *Courtwell*! come Sir, you and I must Tilt a little.

Court. How! for what? prithee leave fooling.

Lov. For several Reasons, but first upon the Widdows score, you have debauch't her Sir.

Court. What dost mean Ned? I debauch the Widdow?

Lov. Yes, you Sir.

Court. Thou'rt mad.

Lov. No Sir, you have forgot the Lady you made love to, by the Duck-Pond side?

Court. I had a Lady Sir, but she I thought had been thy Mistress.

Lov. For that Ile kill thee too if possible.

Court.

Court. That were the juster quarrel of the two, but I have reason too, to fight with thee, who told the Widdow of my being there thinking to undermine me.

Low. Come Sir, no argument, but this.

Mrs. Easy. D'ye hear *Lovechange*, pray don't fight, for then I must be forc'd to discover my self.

Low. This won't satisfie, stand by dear friend, my honour is engag'd, and I must fight,

Court. I wait you Sir.

Per. Dear *Courtwell*, don't fight, for if you dye, Ile wait on you to your Grave. [weeps]

Court. Whence comes this pretty softness? why for me?

Per. Dost thou not know me yet? Methinks by my faint sigh, thou might'st discover—— Thy once lov'd *Camilla*, at least this voice, might well enough inform thee. [discovers herself]

Low. This is wondrous!

Court. Yes I do know thee, and am asham'd to tell thee that I do so.

Mrs. Easy. What the Devil, i'th a woman all this while?

Per. I can forgive you, if you can be penitent, but on no other terms.

Court. I wou'd not ask it any other way.

Per. Don't let me ask thee that I am asham'd to sue to thee for, can you not guess what 'tis?

Court. Marry thee, by all that's good Ile do't.

Low. This reformation pleases me, and ends our quarrels; come Sir I'm still your friend, if you need my assistance, I am at your service, if not, I have a little peice of transformation here too, that longs to be alone with me.

Court. A Woman this *Ned*?

Low. Yes indeed, and the same you thought you had posselt on the River-side.

Court. Give me the honour of your hand Madam, and your forgiveness.

Mrs. Easy. You have it Sir, and you pretty Sir, I hope we shall be better acquainted hereafter. (Exeunt *Lovechange*, and *Mrs. Easy*.)

Court. Come dear *Camilla* I will loose no time.

Per. I'm overjoy'd at this return of Love! May every moment the rich store improve. [Ex. Court. and Per.]

Scene

Scene Mr. Easy's house, Enter Sir Ralph in Womens Cloaths, to him Easy.

Mr. Easy. One comfort I have yet, that my Wife is in my hands to handle how I please, Ile be reveng'd on her bones however, come impudence let me take you into examination, nay never hide your face, for you are past blushing, come to your Catechise, come.

Sir Ralph. O Lord! what shall I do now? my Nuncle knows all, and I shall be hang'd. *[aside]*

Mr. Easy. Hadst thou had fear before thy eyes, thou couldst not ha' been, to abomination, wicked?

Sir Ralph. I, I, 'tis plain, I do confesse I am something wicked. *(cries)*

Mr. Easy. Are you so? where learnt you this ha? at Church?

Sir Ralph. No indeed Sir, I have not been at Church these many years.

Mr. Easy. Oh impudence! to confesse this to me! was it for this, I took thee into my house? needy, and poor, and made Mistress of all my family, my goods, my wealth, and now dost thou cooprive to Cuckold me, to entertain a lewd Rascal to Whore thee, to mine, and thy eternal shame, what answer canst thou make?

Sir Ralph. Hey tofs! the old Man's mad, what the Devil does he mean now? *[aside]*

Mr. Easy. You must have your youngster with a Pox to you, I was the old Fool, the Cuckold, the Ass, to bear all, I, what say you in your vindication?

Sir Ralph. I am in good hope he does not take me, to be me, I were best to say nothing for fear he shou'd know me. *[aside]*

Mr. Easy. Speak impudence, and tell truth, for it shall be thy last.

Sir R. How! my last? I had as good speak and be hang'd, as have my throat cut silently, I don't like this same dying of any sort. *[aside]*

Mr. E. What say you Mrs. Jilt, what say you for your self? not a word? He break silence then, take that, and that--and that, *[beats him]*

Sir Ralph. Oh Plague of your chastising, hold, hold!

Mr. Easy. Oh are you plyant, are you Mistress?

Sir Ralph. Yes Sir as plyant as you shall be immediately.

[Gets a Battoon and beats Easy.]

Mr. Easy. Hold, hold, Murther, murther, dost thou add this to thy other wickedness? of chastising thy own natural Husband.

Sir R. Your lye Sir, your lye, I am none of your Wife, I defie thee, renounce me quickly, or Ile beat thee into nothing. *Mr. Easy.*

Mr. Easy. Renounce thee? yes I do renounce thee, for thou art a most notorious Whore, and I scorn thee.

Sir Ralph. I will beat thee, till thou deny that too, come Sir about, about, exercise your musty part, come Sir. *[beats him agen;*

Mr. Easy. Murther, murther! no help? shall I be kill'd like Adcon with my own Bitch, ha?

Enter Amorous disguis'd, and Grace.

Sir Ralph. Nay, now I shall be betraid.

Amor. Dear Madam! why so cruel! let me interpose?

Mr. Easy. Who art thou.

Amor. One Sir, related to you now, I am Amorous and thy Kinsman:

Mr. Easy. How! oh undone! undone!

Amor. Not so Sir, Grace will give me a better Character, and you must be contented for we are married Sir.

Grace. Yes indeed Sir, we are married, and beg your good liking of it.

Sir Ralph. Amorous alive! and married to Grace? nay then 'tis no time to dissemble.

Mr. Easy. Oh miserable man! Grace married to thee? how many misfortunes arrive on the neck one of another to make me unhappy, my Wife a Whore, and my Neece married, oh, oh, ho.

Sir Ralph. Nay Sir, Ile keep you company, for I am the miserabler man of the two.

Mr. Easy. Why who are you?

Sir Ralph. Wou'd I had a Wife, to have been a Whore too for me, wou'd I had been the biggest Cuckold in London, so I had had Grace and all her money.

Mr. Easy. Worse, and worse! what art thou?

Sir Ralph. What am I? what shou'd I be? a man as thou art, I am----

Amor. Sir Ralph Spatter?

Sir Ralph. Yes, that I am, i'me sure you have us'd me scurvily.

Mr. Easy. This not my Wife?

Sir Ralph. No, not your wife Sir, I wou'd I were any thing but Sir Ralph, any thing but damnable cheating, cozening woman.

Grace. I always told you Sir Ralph, that I wou'd never marry any but Mr. Amorous:

Sir R. I thought I had made him sure, why Sir if it were not you that was dead? who was it I kill'd?

Amor. Sir, I will shew you presently.

*{Goes out, and brings in Jo
in Amorous's Cloaths.*

Sir Ralph. How! my own man! *Jo!* nay if I had thought t'had been but him that I kill'd, I had never took this disguise.

Jo. Why sir, had I been kill'd, you wou'd as soon have hang'd for't, as for *Mr. Amorous*.

Sir Ralph. Why, thou wer't not dead then?

Jo. No indeed Sir, which was no fault of yours, but of my own natural ability, for you laid it on, without mercy.

Sir Ralph. 'Tis no matter, why did not you speak then?

Jo. Because you wou'd not let me, nor hear me when I did, but I thank my stars you are serv'd in your kind.

Sir Ralph. And didst thou know of the going away of these two Lovers?

Jo. Yes Sir, but durst not resist them, I wou'd have pursu'd 'em, had you given me leave to speak.

Sir Ralph. How got you loose and be hang'd, when the Steed was stoln?

Jo. By great good Fortune, *Mrs. Peg* coming to look for *Mr. Amorous* his dead body as you directed, found me, and untying me, saw 'twas I, and conjur'd me in return to that good office, not to come in to your presence, till I knew *Mr. Amorous*, and *Mrs. Grace*, were married.

Sir Ralph. How! Rogues amongst our selves? my own servant turn upon me, well *Jo*, well, Ile be even with thee for this, however I thrive.

Mr. Easy. Well, since I cannot strive against fate, and that I think I am not long liv'd, I will say Heavens bless you together; and you *Sir Ralph*, I only desire to know how you came in my Wives Night-cloaths, 'twas not long since you past out of my house, boasting your love for my Wife, and telling me——

Sir Ralph. Who I Sir, no, no, 'twas not I, alas I flew hither by *Peg's* advice for refuge, but I find 'twas only a trick to abuse me with, and to help your Wife to make an escape.

Mr. Easy. Escape! Why, is my Wife gone? nay then by this time she has acted, what before was but design'd, and by this time I am a most formidable monster, however I am arriv'd to this knowledge, that

that nothing can oppose a womans will. But Ile be divorced from her, and let her see, what her new Gallant will do.

Enter Courtwell, and Camilla.

Mr. Easy. What's here to do, more mischief? nay, nay, never bow to me, I imagine what 'tis you wou'd say; pardon me Sir for the freedom I have taken in chusing a Wife without your approbation, and so forth.

Court. You are in the right Sir.

Mr. Easy. Am I so Sir? A Pox take ye all, may you be Cuckolds as great as I am! and have the consolation to know it, as well as I do, with all my heart, I say, with all my heart, de' ye hear?

Enter Mrs. Woodbee and Clare.

Wood. Sir, I am come, not out of kindness to you, but revenge, to let you know——

Mr. Easy. That I am a Cuckold, a contented yeilding Cuckold, yes spare your pains, I know't, I know't, Mistris d'ye hear, I know't, and am contented, and what have you to say to this, ha?

Wood. I am glad you know your misery as well as I do mine.

Mr. Easy. Thine? I wish no better companion, much good may it do you, d'ye hear? very much good, oh it lightens my heart!

Wood. I have a Husband Sir——

Mr. Easy. Yes, and I have a Wife—— Confound her——

Wood. And do you know my Husband is the man that Cuckolds you?

Mr. Easy. How! thy Husband! still better, and better! I desire no greater Plague shou'd befall you, then to feel what I doe.

Wood. You are very uncharitable, but Sir I find my heart much at ease, and since this common Calamity has befall'n me, I am resolv'd to make the best on't, I have put off my Husband, and intend to entertain a Gallant.

Court. Faith Madam i'me sorry I cannot serve you, for i'me newly entring upon that dangerous Sea, where you have been too lately ship-wrack't.

Wood. Why Mr. Courtwell, you are not married?

Court. Yes indeed am I.

Clare. Faith Madam, i'de 'en think of Mr. Perigreen, he's very pretty, and very young,

Court.

Court. Say it thou to *Clare*, to thy hearts breaking, behold, that pretty young Gentleman is become a Lady, and my Wife, *Clare*.

Clare. Is he? well there's no trust in humane things! well the Town's wide, and many distressed Gamesters will be glad upon a loosing hand, to be kind.

Wood. Nay if *Mr. Courtwell* be gone, I will never think of his Sex more, but thus kind Ile be to *Lovechange*, to beg of you *Mr. Easy*, to resign your Wife to him, being much fitter to be his Mistress.

Mr. Easy. I do renounce her, let her do what she will, Ile have a Mistress too, and will be young agen, what say you *Betty*?

Betty. Sir, I never lik't an old man much, especially having been so lately a Lady to a young Knight.

Sir Ralph. Sure *Jo*, Ile take thy counsel, 'twere simple to go home and be laught at, as all the Country will do, if I return without a wife.

Jo. Besides sir, you will have your thousand pounds agen.

Sir Ralph. I, I, I consider'd that too man! come *Mrs. Betty* if you think fit, Ile 'en take you instead of *Mrs. Grace*, ungrateful *Grace*.—

Grace. Indeed *Sir Ralph*, she'l make a good wife.

Sir Ralph. She's the worse for thy recommendations, but however she shall take the wall of her Mistress.

Mr. Easy. Well said *Sir Ralph*, I like your resolution, I will be young agen, and gay, and I will like every Extravagance, here take *Betty*, and we'l send for the musick; I will dance, and forget all sorrow, oh that my Wife, my kind, my handsome young Wife, were here now, I wou'd give her to *Lovechange*, yes heartily, and wish 'em joy together, come, some musick there, I will not ask you *Amorons*, what settlement my Neece has, for I believe she deserves none, they will be all alike, all turn— 'tis no matter what— nor you Nephew, I will not ask what Fortune your Wife has, for be she rich, or be she poor, she will prove an errant— Much good may't do you sir, I am young agen, and will live as lewdly as the best of you, come fall to dancing, be merry, very merry, whilst you may, for sorrow will come fast enough Ile warrant ye, come, come, to Frisking, to Frisking.

[*They Dance.*]

Enter Lovechange and Mrs. Easy in Masquerade.

Lov. By your leave Sir—

Mr. Easy. Gentlemen y'are welcome, very welcome.

Mrs. Easy.

Mrs. Easy. I doubt you wou'd recall that word, if you knew who we were.

Mr. Easy. You are mistaken Sir, I care not if you be *Lovechange*, and my quondam Wife, d'ye hear, you are still welcome.

Lov. Say you so Sir, then have at ye.

[discovers

Mr. Easy. So, I like this well, I am pleas'd, wondrous pleas'd, here Sir, instead of affronting you, I will present you, come Sir, never hang back, I know you well, here — live — and lye — and be hang'd — together if you please, with all my heart d'ye hear? I am not angry, no the business is done, I am a Cuckold that's not my fault, but I will not be a Fool, and so, much good may it do you kindly.

Mrs. Easy. Well Sir, I thank you, 'tis no disgrace to be a Mistress as the World goes.

Lov. Faith Sir, in this gift, you have been so generous, and obliging, that I have nothing to return but my Wife, by my troth Sir, try her, your Nephew has found her brisk and active, she's a good soul, she made an excellent Wife for the time, perhaps she may repair by you, the loss she has sustain'd by me.

Easy. But while these gods Almighty, Guineys reign, [shews a purse

The needy Miss, though chaste, can scarce contain

Religion, and her Hosts of Vertues, prove

Too yeilding, to resist such pow'r of Love.

Jove never rain'd in Gold, but you found Laps,

Without respect to after Thunder-claps:

The loose Gallant grown poor, must yeild, and then

Hey for old Wine, old Treasures, and old Men.

F I N I S.

Court. Say it thou so, *Clare*? to thy hearts breaking, behold, that pretty young Gentleman is become a Lady, and my Wife, *Clare*.

Clare. Is he? well there's no trust in humane things! well the Town's wide, and many distressed Gamblers will be glad upon a loosing hand, to be kind.

Wood. Nay if Mr. *Courtwell* be gone, I will never think of his Sex more, but thus kind Ile be to *Lovechange*, to beg of you Mr. *Easy*, to resign your Wife to him, being much fitter to be his Mistress.

Mr. Easy. I do renounce her, let her do what she will, Ile have a Mistress too, and will be young agen, what say you *Betty*?

Betty. Sir, I never lik't an old man much, especially having been so lately a Lady to a young Knight.

Sir Ralph. Sure Jo, Ile take thy counsel, 'twere simple to go home and be laught at, as all the Country will do, if I return without a wife.

Jo. Besides Sir, you will have your thousand pounds agen.

Sir Ralph. I, I, I consider'd that too man! come Mrs. *Betty* if you think fit, Ile 'en take you instead of Mrs. *Grace*, ungrateful *Grace*.—

Grace. Indeed *Sir Ralph*, she'l make a good wife.

Sir Ralph. She's the worse for thy recommendations, but however she shall take the wall of her Mistress.

Mr. Easy. Well said *Sir Ralph*, I like your resolution, I will be young agen, and gay, and I will like every Extravagance, here take *Betty*, and we'l send for the musick; I will dance, and forget all sorrow, oh that my Wife, my kind, my handsome young Wife, were here now, I wou'd give her to *Lovechange*, yes heartily, and wish 'em joy together, come, some musick there, I will not ask you *Amorons*, what settlement my Neece has, for I believe she deserves none, they will be all alike, all turn— 'tis no matter what— nor your Nephew, I will not ask what Fortune your Wife has, for be she rich, or be she poor, she will prove an errant— Much good may't do you Sir, I am young agen, and will live as lewdly as the best of you, come fall to dancing, be merry, very merry, whilst you may, for sorrow will come fast enough Ile warrant ye, come, come, to Frisking, to Frisking.

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Without respect to after Thunder-claps:
The loose Gallant grown poor, must yeild, and then
Hey for old Wine, old Treasures, and old Men.*

FINIS.

The Epilogue.

WHat has our Poet done you look so big,
Has he not treated you with brisk Intrigue?
Some with dull Morals, wou'd affront the Age,
And make a Conventicle of the Stage.
Shou'd be, but treat you with such things as those be:
Damn the sententious Fop — come — let's to Moseley.
Wou'd ye recall some stories of your own,
What on this Tust, what on that Bank was done,
Our Play perhaps uncensur'd might have gone.
You Rogue cries one, behold on yonder side,
I joy to name it; I, and Phillis dy'd:
Another with fierce Indignation rap't,
Cries, Damn her for a Whore there were I Clap't:
Another yea, whoever lives, and sees,
I fear you'l rub the Rind off from the Trees.
Yet for all this, nothing can relish well,
Unless we huff the gods, and beat the Hell:
With Wit, and Women, you deal much at one,
First you debauch, and then you cry 'um down.

FINIS

